

JOHN WESLEY'S PRACTICAL THEOLOGY AND PREACHING
FOR CONTEMPORARY KOREAN METHODIST PREACHERS

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Doctor of Ministry

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Abstract

John Wesley was a completely practical theologian. He pursued the practical issue of salvation. His ultimate concern was how humans could get to heaven. He desired to know the way to heaven all his life. His theology and preaching were all about salvation and were only for the church and the Christian life.

This project is designed a three-session seminar and is for contemporary Korean Methodist preachers. It explores Wesley's practical theology and preaching and deals with Adam Hamilton's preaching as a great model for them. They will have greater understanding of John Wesley's practical theology and preaching and apply them to their sermons.

Table of Contents

Chapter One. Introduction	1
The Problem	1
The Importance of the Problem	1
Thesis	2
Scope and Limitation	2
Procedure for Integration	2
Chapter Outlines	3
Chapter Two. John Wesley's Practical Theology	5
Introduction	5
1. John Wesley's theology of Prevenient Grace	7
2. John Wesley's theology of Justification	10
3. John Wesley's theology of Sanctification	13
4. John Wesley's theology of Christian Perfection	16
Chapter Three. The Preaching of John Wesley	19
Introduction	19
Sermon 1. Salvation by Faith	21
Sermon 2. The Almost Christian	24
Sermon 5. Justification by Faith	26
Sermon 18. The Marks of the New Birth	29
Sermon 20. The Lord Our Righteousness	31
Sermon 40. Christian Perfection	33
Sermon 85. On Working Out Our Own Salvation	35

Chapter Four. The Preaching of Adam Hamilton	38
Introduction	38
1. The Preaching Philosophy of Adam Hamilton	39
2. The Sermon Preparation of Adam Hamilton	42
3. The Christ-Centered Preaching of Adam Hamilton	46
4. The Characteristics of Adam Hamilton’s Preaching	50
Chapter Five. The Project	57
Introduction	57
Session One. John Wesley’s Practical Theology	58
Session Two. The Preaching of John Wesley	65
Session Three. The Preaching of Adam Hamilton	72
Evaluation	79
Conclusion	81
Bibliography	82

Chapter One. Introduction

The Problem

The problem addressed by this project is the need among contemporary Korean Methodist preachers for more than a superficial understanding of Wesleyan theology and preaching so that their sermons will have a unique Wesleyan content as well as power to save souls, change lives, and bring growth to the Korean Methodist Church.

The Importance of the Problem

The Korean Methodist Church was started by the American missionary Henry G. Apenzeller in 1885. Korean Methodist leaders gave leadership during the Pyoungyang Great Revival in 1907 that brought great change to the church and society. However, the Korean Methodist Church today is in a serious crisis reflected in its declining numbers and ability to have an impact on Korean society.

Methodist Theological University, the major Methodist seminary of Korea, does not focus on teaching John Wesley's sermons. Wesley did not write books concerning systematic theology or church dogmatics, but rather, he was a completely practical theologian who expressed his theology and faith through his sermons. So in order to completely understand Wesley's theology, preachers should study the theology that is expressed in his sermons. Through thorough study of Wesley's sermons, Korean Methodist preachers can understand what Wesley, their founder, wanted to proclaim, and finally have their own flavor.

I believe that the current crisis of the Korean Methodist Church essentially results from the crisis of the pulpit. Unfortunately, Korean Methodist preachers have a

superficial understanding about John Wesley's theology and preaching so their preaching does not have the power to save souls and change lives, and the Korean Methodist Church has continually declined as a result. I am convinced that if the Korean Methodist preachers could arm themselves with Wesley's practical theology and passion for the gospel, the Korean Methodist Church would experience revival and help lead Korean society once again.

Thesis

This project undertakes to design a three-session seminar for young Korean Methodist pastors in Southern California that will help them to have greater understanding of John Wesley's practical theology and preaching and apply them to their sermons.

Scope and Limitation

This project focuses on John Wesley's practical theology and preaching. The project, therefore, does not discuss all aspects of preaching such as history, style, or methodology. The project also analyzes the preaching of Adam Hamilton, who is one of the most influential United Methodist preachers today. The concluding section applies his preaching methods to contemporary Korean Methodist preachers.

Procedure for Integration

The method of integration for this project is mainly library research including books, articles, and journals. The project seeks to design a three-session seminar for young Korean Methodist pastors in Southern California. There is a fellowship meeting for young Korean Methodist pastors. We share our ministry experiences and plans, along

with ideas and insights from Bible studies or sermons. So I will invite them to participate in a seminar and share with them John Wesley's practical theology and preaching and then encourage them to apply these theological understandings to their sermons. During the three-session seminar, I will teach the contents of one chapter and receive feedback from them as to how this would help their preaching.

Chapter Outlines

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter presents the problem addressed by the project, as well as the importance of this problem. It also provides a thesis statement, outlines scope and limitation, and describes the procedure for integration and chapter outlines.

Chapter Two: John Wesley's Practical Theology

This chapter explores John Wesley's practical theology. It studies why Wesley's theology is "practical" theology. It also covers Wesley's thoughts on prevenient grace, justification, regeneration, sanctification, and Christian perfection.

Chapter Three: The Preaching of John Wesley

This chapter deals with John Wesley's preaching. It discusses the characteristics of Wesley's preaching and his preaching philosophy. It also summarizes and analyzes his main sermons including Salvation by Faith (Sermon 1), The Almost Christian (Sermon 2), Justification by Faith (Sermon 5), The Marks of the New Birth (Sermon 18), The Lord Our Righteousness (Sermon 20), Christian Perfection (Sermon 40), and On Working Out Our Own Salvation (Sermon 85).

Chapter Four: The Preaching of Adam Hamilton

This chapter explores the preaching of Adam Hamilton. It suggests his preaching

as a model for contemporary Korean Methodist preachers. It extrapolates how his preaching is part of the Wesleyan theological and homiletical tradition, which has helped make him one of the most influential United Methodist preachers today.

Chapter Five: The Project

This chapter describes the design and implementation of a three-session seminar presented to young Korean Methodist pastors in Southern California. It also evaluates its effectiveness.

Conclusion

This provides a summary and conclusion for this project and makes recommendations for further research.

Chapter Two. John Wesley's Practical Theology

Introduction

John Wesley was a practical theologian. Albert Outler argues that Wesley not only was a great theologian, but also his theological methodology is still significant for contemporary theology.¹ Yet Outler makes it clear that Wesley is a folk theologian, “no theological titan, no system builder, no theologian’s theologian.”² Wesley was a pastor and a practical theologian who pursued the practical issue of salvation. According to Kenneth Collins, Wesley is not a systematic theologian in the modern sense of the term, but his theological style is excellent in the area of practical divinity.³

Wesley’s consistent concern was how humans could get to heaven. He desired to know the way to heaven all his life. Interestingly, Luther’s continuing question was how a sinner could stand before the righteous God. Luther and Wesley, two spiritual giants, both had a similar, fundamental question of life in their spiritual journey.

Wesley pursued the essential issue of salvation, not philosophical or abstract issues. Thomas Langford points out that “Wesley’s practical theology was to bring the gospel and life together, and to make the message clear in expressing God’s grace, so Wesley was not interested in abstract or systematic theological exploration.”⁴ Wesley’s

¹ Albert C. Outler, “Towards a Re-Appraisal of John Wesley as a Theologian,” in *The Wesleyan Theological Heritage*, eds. Thomas C. Oden and Leicester R. Longden (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991), 40.

² Outler, 43.

³ Kenneth J. Collins, *The Theology of John Wesley: Holy Love and the Shape of Grace* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007), 5.

⁴ Thomas A. Langford, “John Wesley and Theological Method,” in *Rethinking Wesley’s Theology: for Contemporary Methodism*, ed. Randy L. Maddox (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 37.

all concern was to proclaim the life-changing message based on the gospel.⁵ This is why Wesley used the term, “plain old Bible divinity” or “practical divinity” rather than “theology” in his writings.⁶ Langford affirms that “Wesley’s primary concern throughout his development was with human salvation. Around this hub his thought was extended like spokes.”⁷

In his sermon, *The Scripture Way of Salvation*, Wesley stresses that the end of Christianity is, in one word, salvation, and the means to attain it is faith.⁸ Indeed, Wesley was deeply concerned with the issue of salvation. Collins argues that the theology of John Wesley is Christ-centered and his practical theology is based on Christology.⁹ Collins affirms that “Wesley’s theology is so deeply rooted in Christology.”¹⁰ For Wesley, Jesus Christ is “the Redeemer, of course, but also as the Creator, Author, Sustainer, Preserver, Governor, and End.”¹¹

Wesley notes that faith and salvation are the substance of the Bible.¹² Wesley believes that faith is the gift of God. No one can believe in God without God’s grace. Randy Maddox, however, points out that “without God’s grace, we *cannot be* saved; while without our (grace-empowered, but uncoerced) participation, God’s grace *will not* save.”¹³ Humans have to respond to God’s grace by faith. This is the tension in Wesley’s theology.

⁵ Langford, 38.

⁶ Collins, 2.

⁷ Langford, 38.

⁸ John Wesley, Sermon 43, “The Scripture Way of Salvation,” 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, eds. Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 372.

⁹ Collins, 87.

¹⁰ Ibid., 88.

¹¹ Ibid., 92.

¹² Wesley, Sermon 43, “The Scripture Way of Salvation,” 2, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 372.

¹³ Randy L. Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley’s Practical Theology* (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994), 19.

Wesley realized that humans could be justified by faith alone and true faith was the key to the way to heaven. According to Robert Cushman, Wesley had “true living faith” in mind and the nature of this faith is the core of Wesley’s “experimental divinity.”¹⁴ Cushman asserts that this experimental divinity can be seen as his Scripture way of salvation.¹⁵ Collins provides his summary concerning Wesley’s theology with the following:

With this larger purpose of sharing the glad tidings of salvation, Wesley not surprisingly rejected abstract, philosophical, and speculative accounts of the Christian faith and instead focused on what he had termed “practical divinity.” Thus, much of Wesley’s theological interest devolved upon the hope and task of raising up genuine disciples of Jesus Christ, those who were willing, indeed eager, to go beyond the form of religion in order to taste something of its power.¹⁶

In this chapter, Wesley’s theology of Prevenient Grace, Justification, Sanctification, and Christian Perfection will be summarized and analyzed.

1. John Wesley’s theology of Prevenient Grace

Wesley defines what prevenient grace is in his sermon, “The Scripture Way of Salvation.” He defines prevenient grace as:

all the drawings of the Father; the desires after God, which, if we yield to them, increase more and more; --all that light wherewith the Son of God "enlighteneth every one that cometh into the world;" showing every man "to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God"; --all the convictions which His Spirit, from time to time, works in every child of man--although it is true, the generality of men stifle them as soon as possible, and after a while forget, or at least deny, that they ever had them at all.¹⁷

¹⁴ Robert E. Cushman, *John Wesley’s Experimental Divinity* (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1989), 62.

¹⁵ Cushman, 62.

¹⁶ Collins, 328.

¹⁷ Wesley, Sermon 43, “The Scripture Way of Salvation,” I. 2, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 373.

Prevenient grace is the grace of God that precedes human decision. It exists prior to anything humans may have done. It does not depend on any power or merit in humans.

Collins points out that “Outler has suggested that grace itself is the axial theme of Wesley’s theology” and that Maddox has maintained that “it is ‘responsible grace’ that is the lodestar of all.”¹⁸ Collins, then, posits the following:

In Wesley’s estimation such freedom, restored by grace after the debilitating efforts of original sin, renders men and women both “addressable” and “accountable” with the consequence that they are capable of both reward and punishment. Again, apart from this measure of freedom restored by grace, humanity would be like the sun or the moon, incapable of either virtue or vice. Moreover, as the next chapter will demonstrate, since this restoring grace goes before salvation, properly speaking, then it is “prevenient” in the best sense of the term. . . . That is, prevenient grace in this initial context puts in place a more limited freedom of responsibility, that is, a freedom to receive the further grace of God (deeper levels of prevenient grace) by which one can then indeed do otherwise. In other words, the emphasis here as elsewhere is not on humanity and its “capacities” (which can quickly lead to moralism), but on the efficacious grace of God; not on human powers, but on the divine benefit that can be received by persons as they become increasingly open to grace upon grace.¹⁹

Collins explains that prevenient grace is all grace that comes before justifying and sanctifying grace.²⁰ It is the grace that comes before.²¹

Wesley maintains that salvation begins with preventing grace.²² Wesley notes that everyone has a natural conscience and this is not natural, so it is more properly termed preventing grace.²³ Preventing grace includes the first wish to please God and the first

¹⁸ Collins, 5.

¹⁹ Ibid., 29-30.

²⁰ Ibid., 75.

²¹ Ibid., 76.

²² Wesley, Sermon 85, “On Working Out Our Own Salvation,” II. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 488.

²³ Wesley, “On Working Out Our Own Salvation,” III. 4, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 491.

slight conviction of having sinned against God.²⁴ Humans have a greater or lesser measure of this. Preventive grace surrounds all humans and allows them to cooperate with saving grace.

According to Collins, Wesley points out five benefits of preventive grace in his writings.²⁵ They are “Basic knowledge of the attributes of God,” “Re-inscription of the moral law,” “Conscience,” “A measure of free will graciously restored,” “The restraint of wickedness.”²⁶ First, Wesley notes that a basic knowledge of the attributes of God is revealed to all humans “as a result of the preventive agency of the Holy Spirit.”²⁷ Humans, therefore, came to have at least some understanding of God. Second, Wesley asserts that God re-inscribes a knowledge of the moral law on humans’ hearts through preventive grace.²⁸ Third, Wesley reveals that the ultimate origin of conscience is God²⁹, and considers conscience and preventive grace the same.³⁰ Wesley is convinced that conscience is a special gift of God.³¹ Fourth, Wesley maintains that “the will of man is by nature free only to evil” but a measure of human free-will is restored by the grace of God.³² Lastly, Wesley believes that “the grace of God checks human evil, at least to some extent.”³³

²⁴ Ibid., II. 1, 488.

²⁵ Collins, 77.

²⁶ Ibid., 78.

²⁷ Ibid., 77.

²⁸ Ibid., 77.

²⁹ Ibid., 77.

³⁰ Ibid., 78.

³¹ Ibid., 78.

³² Ibid., 79.

³³ Ibid., 80.

2. John Wesley's theology of Justification

In the sermon, “The Lord our Righteousness,” Wesley asserts that justification through Christ is the nature of Christianity. As Fred Sanders points out, Wesley’s teaching on justification “was a matter of great and passionate emphasis. It was an electrifying doctrine for him, never one to be taken for granted.”³⁴ He totally agrees with Luther that the doctrine of justification is the article on which the church stands or falls. For Wesley, this doctrine is “certainly the pillar and ground of that faith, of which alone cometh salvation.”³⁵

Wesley points out that “how a sinner may be justified before God, the Lord and Judge of all, is a question of no common importance to every child of man.”³⁶ He then explains the general ground of the whole doctrine of justification. By the sin of the first Adam, humans fell short of the glory of God. Yet, by the sacrifice for sin made by the Second Adam, God is reconciled to humans. Now "we are justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ" (Rom 3:24).

Faith and Justification

Wesley maintains that “Justification is another word for pardon,” and “the meritorious cause of our justification is the blood and righteousness of Christ.”³⁷ Wesley affirms that the ultimate end of Christianity is salvation and the means to attain it is faith.³⁸ For Wesley, two words, faith and salvation are “the substance of all the Bible”

³⁴ Fred Sanders, *Wesley on the Christian Life* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2013), 134.

³⁵ Wesley, Sermon 20, “The Lord our Righteousness,” 4, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 383.

³⁶ Wesley, Sermon 5, “Justification by Faith,” 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 112.

³⁷ Wesley, Sermon 43, “The Scripture Way of Salvation,” I. 3, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 373.

³⁸ Wesley, “The Scripture Way of Salvation,” 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 372.

and “the marrow of the whole Scripture.”³⁹ Wesley explains that faith is the only condition of justification.⁴⁰ Faith alone is sufficient for justification. Everyone who believes is justified.

Wesley defines Justifying faith as “a sure trust and confidence that Christ died for ‘my’ sins, that he loved ‘me,’ and gave himself for ‘me.’”⁴¹ He, then, affirms that “‘the only instrument of salvation’ is faith.”⁴² Faith is a certain trust and confidence that God forgives my sins and accepts me through the merits of Christ.

Wesley states that the gospel is the message that "Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners"(2Tim 1:15) and "God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, to the end we might not perish, but have everlasting life"(John 3:16).⁴³ Anyone who believes this is justified. Wesley, however, makes it clear that this faith is different from bare intellectual assent. He points out that the devils believe that the Bible is true and yet they are still devils.⁴⁴ True faith is “a sure trust in the mercy of God, through Christ Jesus.”⁴⁵ It is a daring confidence that Christ loved me and gave himself for me, and that I am redeemed by the blood of Christ.

According to Wesley, “the true, living, Christian faith is not only an assent, an act of the understanding; but a disposition, which God has worked in his heart.”⁴⁶ He defines Christian faith as “not only an assent to the whole gospel of Christ, but also a full reliance

³⁹ Ibid., 2, 372.

⁴⁰ Ibid., III. 1, 375.

⁴¹ Wesley, Sermon 5, “Justification by Faith,” IV. 2, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 118.

⁴² Wesley, “Justification by Faith,” IV. 3, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 118.

⁴³ Wesley, Sermon 7, “The Way to the Kingdom,” II. 8, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 130.

⁴⁴ Wesley, “The Way to the Kingdom,” II. 10, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 131.

⁴⁵ Ibid., II. 10, 131.

⁴⁶ Wesley, Sermon 18, “The Marks of the New Birth,” I. 3, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 175.

on the blood of Christ; a trust in the merits of his life, death, and resurrection.”⁴⁷ For Wesley, genuine faith is a faith in Christ. Christ alone is our “wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption”(1Cor. 1:30). Wesley declares that salvation by faith in Christ is, and must be, the foundation of all preaching.⁴⁸

The Imputation of the Righteousness of Christ

Wesley defines that the righteousness of Christ is twofold, his divine or his human righteousness.⁴⁹ Christ’s divine righteousness belongs to his divine nature as he is God. Wesley points out that the divine righteousness of Christ is not imputed to humans, but the human righteousness of Christ in the doctrine of imputation.⁵⁰ Christ’s human righteousness belongs to his human nature. Jesus Christ was 100% God and 100% human when he was on the earth. He completely obeyed God and fulfilled all of laws. This righteousness of Christ is imputed to all believers.⁵¹ Collins points out that for Wesley, “imputation is a testament to the sheer grace and utter favor of God in forgiving sinners.”⁵² In the very moment they believe in Christ as their Lord and Savior, the righteousness of Christ is imputed. Wesley believes that “faith and the righteousness of Christ are inseparable.”⁵³ Believing is to believe in the righteousness of Christ. There is no justifying faith apart from the righteousness of Christ.

Wesley believes that humans are forgiven and accepted only by what Christ has done on the cross. This is biblical teaching that “by grace you are saved through faith, not

⁴⁷ Wesley, Sermon 1, “Salvation by Faith,” I. 5, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 42.

⁴⁸ Wesley, “Salvation by Faith,” III. 7, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 46.

⁴⁹ Wesley, Sermon 20, “The Lord our Righteousness,” I, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 383.

⁵⁰ Wesley, “The Lord our Righteousness,” I. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 384.

⁵¹ Ibid., II. 1, 385.

⁵² Collins, 175.

⁵³ Wesley, “The Lord our Righteousness,” II. 1, 385.

of works, lest any man should boast"(Eph. 2:8). Humans are justified by faith, not by works. Wesley argues that humans have to reject all trust and hope in themselves so that they can thoroughly depend upon Christ.⁵⁴ Humans have to renounce themselves in order to be found in Christ and to be accepted through Christ.⁵⁵ They come to God "as a lost, miserable, self-destroyed, self-condemned, undone, helpless sinner."⁵⁶ For Wesley, therefore, to believe in God is to accept and acknowledge the fact that humans can do nothing without Him. The righteousness of God is the work of God, and not of humans. It is the gift of God. Humans are justified by grace through faith in Christ.

3. John Wesley's theology of Sanctification

According to Wesley, in the very moment that humans are justified, sanctification begins.⁵⁷ Believers are born again in that moment. When they are born again, the gradual work of sanctification takes place. Believers are enabled to mortify the deeds of the body by the works of the Holy Spirit. Wesley notes that believers are sanctified by faith. It is exactly the same as when humans are justified by faith. Thus, "faith is the condition, and the only condition, of sanctification, exactly as it is of justification."⁵⁸ All believers are sanctified, and without faith, no humans are sanctified.

Wesley affirms that faith alone is sufficient for sanctification.⁵⁹ No humans are sanctified until they believe. Anyone who believes is sanctified. Wesley, however, also

⁵⁴ Ibid., II. 11, 387.

⁵⁵ Wesley, Sermon 18, "The Marks of the New Birth," I. 3, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 175.

⁵⁶ Wesley, "The Marks of the New Birth," I. 3, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 175.

⁵⁷ Wesley, Sermon 43, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," I. 4, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 373.

⁵⁸ Wesley, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," III. 3, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*,

⁵⁹ Ibid., III. 3, 376.

acknowledges that all believers who are justified have to be zealous of good works.⁶⁰ He teaches that good works which are to be necessary to sanctification are first, all works of piety; such as prayers, the supper of the Lord, Bible reading, and fasting. Secondly, all works of mercy; such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, entertaining the stranger, visiting those that are in prison, or sick.⁶¹ Wesley teaches that these are the fruits of true repentance and are necessary to full sanctification.⁶² All Christians should pursue this complete salvation in their faith journey.

The reason why Wesley affirms that faith is the only condition of sanctification is that humans cannot be sanctified without faith. For Wesley, although repentance or good works are necessary to full salvation, they are not necessary in the same degree with faith.⁶³ These are only necessary conditionally. The moment humans believe, therefore, they are sanctified with or without good works or repentance.

According to Wesley, to preach salvation or justification by faith alone is productive of all good works, and all holiness.⁶⁴ It is not against holiness and good works, rather it makes believers to produce beautiful fruits of their lives. For Wesley, “the faith which brings not forth repentance, and love, and all good works, is not that right living faith, but a dead and devilish one.”⁶⁵ Wesley defines true Christian faith as:

not only to believe that Holy Scripture and the Articles of our Faith are true, but also to have a sure trust and confidence to be saved from everlasting damnation by Christ. It is a sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that, by the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven, and he

⁶⁰ Ibid., III. 5, 377.

⁶¹ Ibid., III. 9, 378.

⁶² Ibid., III. 10, 378.

⁶³ Ibid., III. 13, 378.

⁶⁴ Wesley, Sermon 1, “Salvation by Faith,” III. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 44.

⁶⁵ Wesley, Sermon 2, “The Almost Christian,” II. 4, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 66.

reconciled to the favor of God; whereof doth follow a loving heart, to obey his commandments.⁶⁶

Thus, true believers who have this faith fill their hearts with love both to God and to humans, and they are not almost Christians, “altogether” Christian who are working by love.

Wesley argues that holiness and good works are an immediate fruit of the faith whereby believers are justified.⁶⁷ Thus, if good works do not follow faith, it is plain that the faith is worth nothing. A good tree brings forth good fruit. Wesley defines holiness as being cleansed from filthiness both of flesh and spirit. It is also to be perfect as God is perfect.⁶⁸ Wesley affirms that believers should always pursue to be holy because their bodies are the temple of God.

For Wesley, loving God with all one’s heart, soul, and mind is the sum of sanctification. Sanctification is all comprised in one word, Love. 1 Peter 1:15 says, “... as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct . . . You shall be holy, for I am holy.” Wesley points to the epistle for the most powerful expression concerning perfection: “May the God of peace sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. 5:23).

Wesley makes it clear the teaching of the Bible that love is the fulfilling of the law, the end of the commandment. He notes that love “is not only the first and great

⁶⁶ Wesley, “The Almost Christian,” II. 5, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 66.

⁶⁷ Wesley, Sermon 35, “The Law Established Through Faith: Discourse One,” II. 6, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 273.

⁶⁸ Wesley, Sermon 17, “The Circumcision of the Heart,” I. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 25.

command, but it is all the commandments in one.”⁶⁹ For Wesley, Jesus’ commandment, “you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength” is “the royal law of heaven and earth.”⁷⁰

When humans believe in Jesus Christ whom God has given for their sins, they shall be saved. They come to know, love, and serve God to all eternity. Believers, therefore, should not live to satisfy their physical desires. On the contrary, believers should keep seeking and finding happiness in God.

4. John Wesley’s theology of Christian Perfection

Christian Perfection is one of the most important thoughts of John Wesley. Among his original theological thoughts, such as prevenient grace, Christian perfection is the core of his theology and thought. What is, then, Christian perfection? Some may argue that Christian perfection is life without sin or the perfect life. However, Wesley’s Christian perfection is the life of holy love toward God and others in the Holy Spirit. Wesley states with the following:

A Methodist is one who loves the Lord his God with all his heart, with all his soul, with all his mind, and with all his strength. God is the joy of his heart, and the desire of his soul . . . He is therefore happy in God; yea, always happy, as having in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life, and overflowing his soul with peace and joy. Perfect love having now cast out fear, he rejoices evermore.⁷¹

⁶⁹ Wesley, “The Circumcision of the Heart,” I. 11, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 28.

⁷⁰ Ibid., I. 11, 28.

⁷¹ John Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (Kansas City: Beacon hill press of Kansas city, 1966), 18.

These are the very words wherein Wesley stated his thought on Christian perfection for the first time.⁷² Wesley declares that a Methodist is one who loves God with all one's heart, soul, mind, and strength. Thus, Wesley's Christian perfection is, first of all, to love God wholeheartedly.

Christian perfection is perfect love. It is love rejoicing always, praying without ceasing, in everything giving thanks. Wesley affirms that without love, all we know, all we believe, and all we do are meaningless.⁷³ The love which God requires in humans is the love of God and humanity. To love God is to delight in God, to desire continually to please God, and to seek happiness in God.

Wesley also asserts that Christian perfection is only another term for holiness.⁷⁴ Everyone who is perfect is holy, and everyone who is holy is perfect. There is no absolute perfection on earth. Christians should grow in grace and the knowledge of God. They are saved by faith, and made holy. Believers who are justified by grace through faith should pursue entire sanctification. It is for a full salvation from all sins.

Wesley acknowledges the limitations of human nature. He notes that "(humans) are not perfect in knowledge. They are not free from ignorance, no, nor from mistake."⁷⁵ Humans are not perfect, yet Wesley believes that they can live the life free from evil thoughts and tempers. Wesley does not claim that Christian perfection is a sinless life nor Christians can live a sinless life.⁷⁶ Wesley's Christian perfection is the life that is

⁷² Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, 21.

⁷³ Wesley, Sermon 89, "The More Excellent Way," 4, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 513.

⁷⁴ Wesley, Sermon 40, "Christian Perfection," I. 9, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 71.

⁷⁵ Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, 23-26.

⁷⁶ Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, 54.

cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. For Wesley, Christian perfection is the pure and holy love toward God and others in the Holy Spirit.

Chapter Three. The Preaching of John Wesley

Introduction

Charles H. Spurgeon, the prince of preachers, notes that “if there were wanted two apostles to be added to the number of the twelve, I do not believe that there could be found two men more fit to be so added than George Whitefield and John Wesley.”⁷⁷ Wesley was a great man of God and an outstanding preacher. One historian states about Wesley in this way:

During the greater part of his career he was accustomed to preach about 800 sermons a year, and it was computed that in the fifty years of his itinerant life he travelled a quarter of a million of miles, and preached more than 40,000 sermons.⁷⁸

Preaching was Wesley’s central ministry. Thomas Langford points out that “Wesley did not produce so much a creed as a *kerygma*. Sermons were his chief theological deposit.”⁷⁹

According to Albert Outler, Wesley was by no means the most excellent preacher of his time.⁸⁰ People were not moved by his eloquence. However, Wesley’s message, that clearly revealed the gospel, touched them.⁸¹ Wesley was an itinerant preacher and he mainly preached to workers. Outler points out that Wesley believed that one “should proclaim the essential gospel as if for that one time only.”⁸² Wesley, therefore, focused

⁷⁷ C. H. Spurgeon’s *Autobiography*, vol. 1 (London: Passmore and Alabaster, 1899), 176, quoted in Fred Sanders, *Wesley on the Christian Life* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2013), 14.

⁷⁸ Lecky, *A History of England During the Eighteenth Century*, 2:682, quoted in Sanders, *Wesley on the Christian Life*, 45.

⁷⁹ Thomas A. Langford, “John Wesley and Theological Method,” in *Rethinking Wesley’s Theology: for Contemporary Methodism*, ed. Randy L. Maddox (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 37.

⁸⁰ Albert C. Outler, *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Introduction* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 26.

⁸¹ Outler, 27.

⁸² Outler, 26.

on the gospel message whenever he preached. Langford notes that one of the characteristics of Wesley's preaching is "the dynamic interaction between speaking the message and life-changing reception of the message."⁸³ Langford argues that "preaching intends to evoke response; the gospel is proclaimed in order to transform life" and "Wesley's theology is aware of this totality."⁸⁴

Langford points out that the preaching philosophy of Wesley was "to invite, to convince, to offer Christ, to build up, and to do this in every sermon."⁸⁵ Wesley was captured by the passion for Christ and his preaching was Christ-centered preaching.

Wesley's sermons provide the scripture way of salvation which he pursues in his spiritual journey. Outler affirms that it was preaching that defined Wesley's calling certainly.⁸⁶ Wesley believed that preaching was the primary calling of the apostles and he considered it as his primary job as well. Wesley did not make any creed or confession for his followers. Yet, he explained his theological expositions through his sermons.

In this chapter, seven of Wesley's sermons will be summarized and analyzed. They are: Salvation by Faith (Sermon 1), The Almost Christian (Sermon 2), Justification by Faith (Sermon 5), The Marks of the New Birth (Sermon 18), The Lord Our Righteousness (Sermon 20), Christian Perfection (Sermon 40), and On Working Out Our Own Salvation (Sermon 85).

⁸³ Langford, 37.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 37.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 26.

⁸⁶ Outler, 24.

Sermon 1. Salvation by Faith

Wesley was an Oxford fellow so he sometimes preached in the university services that doctors, masters, graduates, and scholars mainly attended.⁸⁷ Wesley preached this sermon, “Salvation by Faith,” on June 11, 1738 at Oxford University.⁸⁸ It reflects his radical change of heart and thought after his Aldersgate experience on May 24, 1738.⁸⁹ Wesley started to preach a ‘new gospel’ (‘salvation by faith alone’) after the experience.⁹⁰ He began with his preaching ministry after his assurance of salvation and his understanding of saving faith and justification.⁹¹ Fred Sanders points out that the sermon “Salvation by Faith” is the great monument of Wesley’s sermons.⁹²

In his first official sermon, “Salvation by Faith,” Wesley begins by emphasizing grace and faith. According to Wesley, “All the blessings which God has bestowed upon man are of his mere grace.”⁹³ Humans are not deserving of this grace, yet God gives it for free. For Wesley, everything is God’s grace. God gave humans life, breath, and all things. And “there is nothing we are, or have, or do, which can deserve the least thing at God's hand.”⁹⁴ Wesley focuses on God and God’s grace, and points out the limitation of humans as creatures. He states that “Whatever righteousness may be found in man, this is also the gift of God.”⁹⁵ Wesley understands that humans are “all unholy and sinful

⁸⁷ Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater eds., *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 39.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 39.

⁸⁹ Ibid., 39.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 39.

⁹¹ Sanders, 59.

⁹² Ibid., 59.

⁹³ John Wesley, Sermon 1, “Salvation by Faith,” 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 40.

⁹⁴ Wesley, “Salvation by Faith,” 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 40.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 1. 40.

themselves,” so they need “a fresh atonement.”⁹⁶ Humans are totally corrupt and cannot atone for their sins with their own works. Wesley makes it clear that if humans have any works or holiness, they are not their own, but God’s.⁹⁷ Wesley closes his introduction of this sermon by stating that “Grace is the source, faith the condition, of salvation.”⁹⁸

Wesley then explains what kind of faith is necessary for salvation. Wesley points out that this faith is not the faith of a heathen or the faith of a devil.⁹⁹ A heathen has faith and even a devil has faith, yet their faith is not the faith of salvation. According to Wesley, the faith of salvation is a faith in Christ.¹⁰⁰ The objects of faith are Christ and God through Christ. Wesley makes it clear that this faith is not mere intellectual assent, but a faith of the heart.¹⁰¹ This is why Wesley talks about Christianity as a religion of the heart.

Wesley defines what Christian faith in this way:

Christian faith is then, not only an assent to the whole gospel of Christ, but also a full reliance on the blood of Christ; a trust in the merits of his life, death, and resurrection; a recumbency upon him as our atonement and our life, as given for us, and living in us; and, in consequence hereof, a closing with him, and cleaving to him, as our ‘wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,’ or, in one word, our salvation.¹⁰²

Saving faith is a complete reliance on Christ and a trust in what he has done for humans, and is certain that Christ became their own wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

Wesley then explains what salvation is, which is through this faith. Wesley first

⁹⁶ Ibid., 2, 40.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 2, 40.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 3, 40.

⁹⁹ Ibid., I. 1-2, 41.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., I. 4, 41.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., I. 4, 41.

¹⁰² Ibid., I. 5, 42.

notes that salvation is present.¹⁰³ It is not something that humans will get later on in their future, yet it is attainable and actually attained on earth. Wesley then states that those who trust in Christ are saved from sin.¹⁰⁴ All who believe in Christ will be saved from all their sins including original and actual, past and present sin.¹⁰⁵

Wesley finally explains how believers may answer some objections. Some may argue that to preach salvation or justification by faith alone is against pursuing holiness or good works.¹⁰⁶ In response, Wesley makes it clear that true faith produces all good works and holiness.¹⁰⁷ Some may also insist that to preach salvation or justification freely by faith alone makes people keep sinning.¹⁰⁸ Wesley answers that it is possible, but true believers repent and thoroughly depend on God.¹⁰⁹

In the sermon, “Salvation by Faith,” Wesley preaches about what Christian faith is and what salvation is. His preaching is true to the Bible and his message is clear and solid. Wesley’s preaching is completely based on the gospel message and is a great model for contemporary Korean Methodist preachers.

¹⁰³ Ibid., II. 1, 42.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., II. 2, 42.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., II. 2, 42.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., III. 1, 44.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., III. 1, 44

¹⁰⁸ Ibid., III. 4, 45.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid., III. 4, 45.

Sermon 2. The Almost Christian

Wesley preached this sermon, “The Almost Christian,” on June 28, 1741 at Charles Square, London for the first time.¹¹⁰ He then revised and preached it again on July 25 at Oxford University.¹¹¹ Wesley published this sermon right after his preaching at Oxford.¹¹² He reprinted it more than twenty-five times during his lifetime and it was always the second piece of his *Sermons* editions.¹¹³

In his sermon, “The Almost Christian,” Wesley points out that there two kinds of Christians – the “almost Christian” and the “altogether Christian.” First, the “almost Christian” implies heathen morality.¹¹⁴ Heathens do not deceive one another, do not rob their neighbors, and do not oppress the poor, but live a good life as much as they can.¹¹⁵ A second characteristic of the “almost Christian” is that they have a form of godliness.¹¹⁶ They do “nothing which the gospel forbids.”¹¹⁷ They do not profane the Lord’s Day, do not partake in all kinds of adultery and uncleanness.¹¹⁸ In addition, the “almost Christian” uses the means of grace at all opportunities.¹¹⁹ They pray, read the Bible, and even fast regularly. Wesley’s point here is that this kind of Christian could be the “almost Christian, but not the “altogether Christian.”

What is, then, the “altogether Christian?” Wesley explains that the first

¹¹⁰ Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater eds., *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 61.

¹¹¹ Ibid., 61.

¹¹² Ibid., 61.

¹¹³ Ibid., 61.

¹¹⁴ John Wesley, Sermon 2, “The Almost Christian,” I. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 62.

¹¹⁵ Wesley, Sermon 2, “The Almost Christian,” I. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 62.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., I. 4, 63.

¹¹⁷ Ibid., I. 4, 63.

¹¹⁸ Ibid., I. 4, 63.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., I. 7, 63.

characteristic of the “altogether Christian” is that they love God with all their heart, mind, and soul.¹²⁰ The second characteristic of the “altogether Christian” is, then, to love their neighbors.¹²¹ For Wesley, love is the most vital feature of the “altogether Christian.” The “altogether Christian” loves God and neighbors. Wesley also considers faith as a crucial feature of the “altogether Christian.”¹²² Yet, Wesley makes it clear that all faith is not the true faith.¹²³ There is a faith that does not produce repentance and love. It is not a living faith, but “a dead and devilish one.”¹²⁴ Wesley defines the true faith in this way.

The right and true Christian faith is not only to believe that Holy Scripture and the Articles of our Faith are true, but also to have a sure trust and confidence to be saved from everlasting damnation by Christ. It is a sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that, by the merits of Christ, his sins are forgiven, and he reconciled to the favor of God; whereof doth follow a loving heart, to obey his commandments.¹²⁵

Wesley stresses a sure trust and confidence in God’s grace through the work of Christ. Finally, Wesley affirms that the faith working by love is the true faith, and believers who have this faith are the “altogether Christian.”¹²⁶

In the sermon, “The Almost Christian,” Wesley preaches about “the almost Christian” and the “altogether Christian.” They seem to be the same, yet there are crucial differences - love and faith. The “altogether Christian” loves God with their heart, soul, mind, and strength, and loves their neighbors. They also have a true faith in God’s grace and the redemptive work of Christ.

¹²⁰ Ibid., II. 1, 65.

¹²¹ Ibid., II. 2, 65.

¹²² Ibid., II. 3, 66.

¹²³ Ibid., II. 4, 66.

¹²⁴ Ibid., II. 4, 66.

¹²⁵ Ibid., II. 5, 66.

¹²⁶ Ibid., II. 6, 67.

Sermon 5. Justification by Faith

Wesley preached this sermon, “Justification by Faith,” at the chapel in Long Acre, London on May 28, 1738, which is right after his Aldersgate experience on May 24.¹²⁷ Wesley preached on justification from Romans 4:5 more than nine times.¹²⁸ This sermon was first published in 1746.¹²⁹

Fred Sanders points out that:

When Wesley edited and appointed the *Standard Sermons* as the doctrinal norm for his followers, he guaranteed that the doctrine of justification by faith would always have pride of place in Methodist thought. Sermons 5 and 6, both on justification, have a prominent place near the beginning of the collection.¹³⁰

He also argues that:

Wesley’s preaching on justification is among his most immediate and most powerful. Justification is not just another doctrine for him, but the word of salvation, the very thing that must be presented to his audience. He seems aware that this message of justification is the word that can spark immediate response, and he preaches with fervor that speaks to us across the generations.¹³¹

For Wesley, the doctrine of justification is vital for a Christian life and he tried to explain about what justification is and how humans can be justified in this sermon, “Justification by Faith.”

Wesley begins by pointing out that one of the most important questions in the Christian faith is how a sinner can be justified before God.¹³² He also highlights the

¹²⁷ Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater eds., *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 111.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 111.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 111.

¹³⁰ Fred Sanders, *Wesley on the Christian Life* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2013), 131-132.

¹³¹ Sanders, 132-133.

¹³² John Wesley, Sermon 5, “Justification by Faith,” 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 112.

seriousness surrounding how little this important question has been understood.¹³³

Wesley then starts explaining what justification is and how humans are justified before God.

According to Wesley, justification is “not the being made actually just and righteous,”¹³⁴ for he calls that "sanctification,"¹³⁵ but Wesley explains that justification is what God does for us through Jesus Christ, and sanctification is what God works in us through the Holy Spirit.¹³⁶ Wesley clearly states that the definite biblical teaching of justification is the forgiveness of sins.¹³⁷ Because Christ died on the cross carrying human sins, God reckons believers righteous who admit that they are sinners and need Christ for their salvation.¹³⁸ God forgives all the sins of believers freely.

Wesley then explains how humans are justified before the righteous God. Wesley makes it clear that it is by faith alone.¹³⁹ According to Wesley, this Justifying faith is a confident trust that Christ died for humanity and gave himself up because he loved us as Galatians 2:20 states.¹⁴⁰ “And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.” For Wesley, it is clear that "the only instrument of salvation" is faith.¹⁴¹ Wesley defines faith as “a sure trust and confidence that God both has and will forgive our sins, that he has accepted us again into His favor, for the merits of Christ's death and passion.”¹⁴² Wesley is confident that faith is the "only

¹³³ Wesley, Sermon 5, “Justification by Faith,” 2, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 112.

¹³⁴ Wesley, “Justification by Faith,” II. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 114.

¹³⁵ Ibid., II. 1, 114.

¹³⁶ Ibid., II. 1, 114.

¹³⁷ Ibid., II. 5, 115.

¹³⁸ Ibid., II. 5, 115.

¹³⁹ Ibid., IV. 1, 118.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., IV. 2, 118.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., IV. 3, 118.

¹⁴² Ibid., IV. 3, 118.

necessary" condition of justification.¹⁴³ Yet Wesley makes it clear that God considers believers righteous because of their faith, not because believers are actually righteous.¹⁴⁴

In the sermon, "Justification by Faith," Wesley preaches about the mystery of justification. It is a mystery that God counts believers as righteous. Believers are still sinners before God, but God reckons their faith unto them as righteousness when they believe that Jesus Christ died on the cross for their sins.

¹⁴³ Ibid., IV. 5, 119.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., IV. 5, 119.

Sermon 18. The Marks of the New Birth

Wesley preached this sermon, “The Marks of the New Birth,” on June 10, 1739 for the first time, then thirteen times in all until 1757.¹⁴⁵ He first published it in 1748 and it was included in all collections during his lifetime.¹⁴⁶ In his sermon, “The Marks of the New Birth,” Wesley begins by questioning the meaning of being born again, being born of the Spirit, being a child of God, and having the Spirit of adoption.¹⁴⁷ Yet Wesley does not try to define these meanings, instead, he explains the marks of the new birth.

According to Wesley, the foundation mark of the new birth is faith.¹⁴⁸ Yet Wesley makes it clear what this faith is. Wesley points out that this faith is not merely notional nor a bare agreement with the proposition Jesus is Christ.¹⁴⁹ It is also not a simple assent to traditional creeds or the Scripture,¹⁵⁰ and Wesley stresses that the devil has this faith as well.¹⁵¹ He, then, calls this “a dead faith.”¹⁵² For Wesley, the true Christian faith is beyond a bare assent or an understanding;¹⁵³ it is a sure trust and confidence in God through the merits of Christ that one’s sins are forgiven and they are accepted as children of God.¹⁵⁴

Wesley notes that the paramount mark of the new birth is love.¹⁵⁵ Loving God and

¹⁴⁵ Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater eds., *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 173.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 173.

¹⁴⁷ John Wesley, Sermon 18, “The Marks of the New Birth,” 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 174.

¹⁴⁸ Wesley, Sermon 18, “The Marks of the New Birth,” I. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 174.

¹⁴⁹ Wesley, “The Marks of the New Birth,” I. 2, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 174.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., I. 2, 174.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., I. 2, 174.

¹⁵² Ibid., I. 3, 175.

¹⁵³ Ibid., I. 3, 175.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., I. 3, 175.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., III. 1, 179.

loving neighbors are crucial fruit of the new birth. Wesley stresses that believers have to love all people including their enemies.¹⁵⁶ Because Christ says, "As I have loved you, love one another," they have to love their neighbors. According to Wesley, this is the evidence that they are born of God and dwell in God.¹⁵⁷

In the sermon, "The Marks of the New Birth," Wesley makes the meaning of regeneration clear by preaching the marks of the new birth. Those who are born again have a sure trust and confidence that they believe in Jesus Christ, absolutely depend on his blood and righteousness, and are forgiven and accepted by God's grace and mercy. They also do love God and their neighbors as He commanded.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., III. 3, 179.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., III. 3, 179.

Sermon 20. The Lord Our Righteousness

Wesley preached this sermon, “The Lord Our Righteousness,” on Sunday, November 24, 1765, in the chapel in West Street.¹⁵⁸ It was published more than four times thereafter.¹⁵⁹ Fred Sanders points out that this sermon “is number 20 in the *Standard Sermons*, indicating that it has a strategic place in the structure of Wesley’s overall gospel message.”¹⁶⁰

In his sermon, “The Lord Our Righteousness,” Wesley states that the doctrine of justification is the pillar and ground of Christian faith.¹⁶¹ Wesley agrees with Luther’s thought that the doctrine of justification is the article by which the church stands or falls.¹⁶² Wesley explains what the righteousness of Christ is, when it is imputed to believers, and in what sense. First, the righteousness of Christ is twofold, his divine or his human righteousness. His divine righteousness belongs to his divine nature. This is his eternal, essential holiness and his infinite justice, mercy, and truth. Wesley makes it clear that this divine nature of Christ is not imputed to believers, but his human righteousness is.¹⁶³ The human righteousness of Christ belongs to him in his human nature. He is the Mediator between God and humanity. He did the will of God on earth and fulfilled all righteousness. Therefore, Jesus is called "the Lord our righteousness."¹⁶⁴

Second, when is it that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to believers?

¹⁵⁸ Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater eds., *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 381.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 381.

¹⁶⁰ Fred Sanders, *Wesley on the Christian Life* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2013), 144.

¹⁶¹ John Wesley, Sermon 20, “The Lord our Righteousness,” 4, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 383.

¹⁶² Wesley, Sermon 20, “The Lord our Righteousness,” 4, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 383.

¹⁶³ Wesley, “The Lord our Righteousness,” I. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 384.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., I. 2-4, 384.

According to Wesley, there are two kinds of people in the world, believers or unbelievers.

To all believers the righteousness of Christ is imputed; to unbelievers it is not. It is imputed when they believe. In that very hour the righteousness of Christ is theirs.¹⁶⁵

In what sense is this righteousness imputed to believers? All believers are forgiven and accepted, not by their own righteousness or works, but only by what Christ has done for them. Humans are justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.¹⁶⁶ For Wesley, the expressions that we are justified by the grace of God and that Christ is our righteousness are the same thing.¹⁶⁷ Wesley affirms that the righteousness of Christ is the whole and sole foundation of all our hope.

In the sermon, "The Lord Our Righteousness," Wesley stresses the importance of depending on the righteousness of Christ. Because humans cannot be saved by themselves, they have to absolutely rely on Christ. When believers humbly trust in him, the righteousness of Christ is imputed to them. Wesley confesses that "Jesus, your blood and righteousness are my beauty and glorious dress."¹⁶⁸

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., II. 1, 385.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., II. 5, 385.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., II. 9, 387.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., II. 7, 386.

Sermon 40. Christian Perfection

Wesley acknowledges that many people do not like the word perfection, and that it is wrong and dangerous to preach that perfection is attainable in this earth.¹⁶⁹ Wesley, however, is confident that perfection is in the Word of God and should be preached.¹⁷⁰

Wesley notes that Christians are not perfect in knowledge.¹⁷¹ They are not free from ignorance and have too many things they do not know. Wesley, then, points out that Christians are not free from mistakes.¹⁷² They often make mistakes. Christians are also not free from infirmities.¹⁷³ They have weaknesses and cannot be free from them in the earth.

Wesley makes it clear that Christian perfection is not the freedom from ignorance, mistakes, infirmities, or temptations.¹⁷⁴ For Wesley, Christian perfection is “only another term for holiness.”¹⁷⁵ He notes that Christian perfection and holiness “are two names for the same thing.”¹⁷⁶ Wesley argues that everyone who is perfect is holy, and everyone who is holy is perfect.¹⁷⁷ Wesley, finally, affirms that there is no absolute perfection or “perfection of degrees,” and Christians have to still “grow in grace (2 Pet. 3:18)” and daily advance “in the knowledge and love of God his Savior (Phil. 1:9).”¹⁷⁸

Christian perfection is one of the most important thoughts of Wesley. Among his theological thoughts, such as prevenient grace, Christian perfection is the core of his

¹⁶⁹ John Wesley, Sermon 40, “Christian Perfection,” 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 70.

¹⁷⁰ Wesley, Sermon 40, “Christian Perfection,” 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 70.

¹⁷¹ Wesley, “Christian Perfection,” I. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 70.

¹⁷² Ibid., I. 4, 71.

¹⁷³ Ibid., I. 7, 72.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., I. 9, 73.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., I. 9, 73.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., I. 9, 73.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., I. 9, 73.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., I. 9, 73.

theology and thought. Yet unfortunately, Christian perfection has been distinctively and widely misunderstood.¹⁷⁹ Many people, even Methodists, have a tendency to think that Christian perfection is life without sin or the perfect life. Christian perfection, however, is not a sinless life. Wesley never used the phrase “sinless perfection.” In this sermon, “Christian Perfection,” Wesley makes it clear that Christian perfection is only another term for holiness, and he stresses that Christians have to desire to be holy and pursue a holy life.

¹⁷⁹ Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater eds., *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 69.

Sermon 85. On Working Out Our Own Salvation

In this sermon, “On Working Out Our Own Salvation,” Wesley first highlights that God initiates the work of salvation.¹⁸⁰ Then, he directs attention to preventient grace. For Wesley, “Salvation begins with what is usually termed (and very properly) preventing grace; including the first wish to please God, the first dawn of light concerning his will, and the first slight transient conviction of having sinned against him.”¹⁸¹ This is the beginning of salvation, and “salvation is carried on by convincing grace.”¹⁸² Wesley notes that after preventient and convincing grace, believers experience “the proper Christian salvation.”¹⁸³ Wesley, then, explains justification and sanctification. According to Wesley, believers are saved from their sins by justification, and are saved from “the power and root of sin, and restored to the image of God” by sanctification.¹⁸⁴

Wesley also makes it clear that there is a definite human role in salvation.

Humans have to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. Believers should avoid all evil works, and do their best to do good works, including works of piety, and works of mercy. They should also avail themselves to worship and prayers, fasting, reading the Bible, and partaking of the Lord's Supper.¹⁸⁵ Wesley stresses that those who are redeemed by the blood of Christ should go on to perfection.¹⁸⁶

Wesley, then, highlights the fact that “First, God works; therefore you can work.

¹⁸⁰ John Wesley, Sermon 85, “On Working Out Our Own Salvation,” I. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 487.

¹⁸¹ Wesley, Sermon 85, “On Working Out Our Own Salvation,” II. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 488.

¹⁸² Wesley, “On Working Out Our Own Salvation,” II. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 488.

¹⁸³ Ibid., II. 1, 488.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., II. 1, 488.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid., II. 4, 489.

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., II. 4, 489.

Secondly, God works, therefore you must work.”¹⁸⁷ Wesley makes it clear that humans cannot be saved without the works of God.¹⁸⁸ Wesley’s point, however, is that God initiates the work of salvation but humans have to participate in it actively. Wesley, then, mentions preventing grace once again. He states:

No man living is entirely destitute of what is vulgarly called natural conscience. But this is not natural: It is more properly termed preventing grace. Every man has a greater or less measure of this, which waiteth not for the call of man. Every one has, sooner or later, good desires; although the generality of men stifle them before they can strike deep root, or produce any considerable fruit. Everyone has some measure of that light, some faint glimmering ray, which, sooner or later, more or less, enlightens every man that cometh into the world.

Because everyone is given preventing grace, everyone should actively participate in the work of salvation and do good works. Wesley quotes Augustine saying that “*Qui fecit nos sine nobis, non salvabit nos sine nobis*”: “He that made us without ourselves, will not save us without ourselves.”¹⁸⁹ Wesley uses John 5:17, “My Father is still working, and I also am working” to argue that believers should remember this and always do their best to participate in salvation work and do good works.¹⁹⁰

This sermon, “On Working Out Our Own Salvation,” is “the late Wesley’s most complete and careful exposition of the mystery of divine-human interaction.”¹⁹¹ Wesley explains his theory of salvation that God definitely has the initiative of salvation but humans have to actively participate in it. Moreover, Wesley argues that God will not save

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., III. 2, 490.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., III. 3, 490.

¹⁸⁹ Ibid., III. 7, 491.

¹⁹⁰ Ibid., III. 8, 492.

¹⁹¹ Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater eds., *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 485.

believers if they do not fight the good fight of faith and do not deny themselves, taking up their cross daily.

Chapter Four. The Preaching of Adam Hamilton

Introduction

Adam Hamilton is the founding pastor of the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas. The church began with his family alone in 1990 but became the largest United Methodist Church in the United States. It has a membership of over 20,000 and an average weekend worship attendance of 15,000.¹⁹² Hamilton was named one of the "Ten People to Watch in America's Spiritual Landscape" by *Religion & Ethics Newsweekly* and Distinguished Evangelist of the United Methodist Church by the Foundation for Evangelism.¹⁹³

According to James C. Logan, "The United Methodist Church, once the largest denomination of the Protestant establishment, began to report a decline in gross membership in the 1960's. Between the years 1970 and 1984 the denomination lost an average of 1,930 members every week!"¹⁹⁴ In light of the fact that a lot of churches and seminaries are experiencing financial hardship and reduced attendance today, Hamilton's ministry is outstanding and contemporary pastors can learn much from his preaching ministry. Hamilton reveals that the secret of his remarkable church growth is that "much of our approach at Church of the Resurrection is simply an adaptation of what John Wesley did 250 years ago."¹⁹⁵ Hamilton's preaching is powerful, and most importantly, is based on Wesley's practical theology and preaching.

¹⁹² <http://cor.org/staff#adam-hamilton> (accessed May 7, 2017).

¹⁹³ <http://web.archive.org/web/20090817161554/http://www.cor.org/about-resurrection/adam> (accessed May 7, 2017).

¹⁹⁴ James C. Logan, "Offering Christ: Wesleyan Evangelism Today," in *Rethinking Wesley's Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 114.

¹⁹⁵ Adam Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 203.

1. The Preaching Philosophy of Adam Hamilton

Passion and Confidence

There is nothing like standing before a congregation knowing that you have something worth saying – a word from God for their lives, a word that is relevant, about which you are passionate, and for which you are prepared to speak. To preach with conviction and passion and to watch the facial expressions of the congregation, to see that they are listening intently, that they are hearing the word, and that God is speaking to them; is simply does not get any better than this. Such preaching is exhilarating. Part of the joy of this experience is that you are being used by God; God is at work in that moment of preaching and you are the mouthpiece.¹⁹⁶

Hamilton has a great passion for his preaching and deep confidence in it. These attributes make his preaching powerful. Every Sunday many people gather in his church to listen to his preaching that is passionate and convinced. Hamilton, however, also confesses that “preaching is dreadful” because he has to prepare to make his sermon “relevant, fresh, inspiring, well-prepared, and faithful to the scripture” every week.¹⁹⁷ He is grateful for the fact that he could deliver the word of God, but also he feels that the sermon preparation is painful.

Effective Preaching

Hamilton believes that “the world needs preachers” and “preaching is important.”¹⁹⁸ The church is still the hope of the world and people want to listen to the word of God. Hamilton affirms that people today are thirsty for hope and the meaning of life, and are hungry for a word from God, so effective preaching is absolutely needed.¹⁹⁹

What is effective preaching? According to Hamilton, “effective sermons are interesting, relevant, biblical, understandable, offer clear application to the hearer’s daily

¹⁹⁶ Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 76.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 76.

¹⁹⁸ Adam Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003), 9.

¹⁹⁹ Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*, 10.

life, address real-life issues, and are preached with conviction, passion, love, integrity, and humility.”²⁰⁰ It is significant that Hamilton points out that preaching should be interesting and relevant. Because people today tend to consider sermons boring and irrelevant to their everyday lives, pastors should preach interestingly and relevantly. It is also important that Hamilton stresses that pastors have to preach with confidence, passion, love, integrity, and humility. These are essential attitudes that every preacher should remember. Preachers should have confidence in their messages and deliver them with passion, love, integrity, and humility.

The purpose and the Five Aims of Preaching

Hamilton notes that great preaching should be “biblical, purposeful, adequately prepared, and emerging from prayer.”²⁰¹ He believes in the power of preaching because God is pleased to use preachers’ sermons. He notes that preaching can transform people’s lives.²⁰² Preachers have to be well trained and be a channel of delivering God’s word. Hamilton affirms that there is nothing that has a greater impact upon Christian lives, than the sermon.²⁰³

Hamilton explains that the purpose of his preaching is to “build a Christian community where non-religious and nominally religious people are becoming deeply committed Christians.”²⁰⁴ What does a deeply committed Christian look like? Hamilton notes that a deeply committed Christian is the one who loves God with all one’s heart,

²⁰⁰ Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 79.

²⁰¹ Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*, 37.

²⁰² Ibid., 10.

²⁰³ Ibid., 35.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 14.

soul, and mind, and loves one's neighbor as oneself.²⁰⁵ He, then, states that these are personal piety and social holiness, and that John Wesley taught that the goal of the Christian life is sanctification.²⁰⁶ Hamilton is deeply influenced by John Wesley and he sometimes quotes Wesley when he preaches or writes a book.

Hamilton reveals that the five aims of his preaching are Evangelism, Discipleship, Pastoral Care, Equipping and Sending, and Institutional Development.²⁰⁷ As a preacher, he hopes to help and deepen the faith of Christians through his evangelistic sermons.²⁰⁸ Hamilton points out that today's pastors in mainline and more liberal traditions tend to have an unbiblical thought on eternal life.²⁰⁹ He, then, affirms that heaven or an afterlife is one of the core doctrines of the Christian faith.²¹⁰ He is confident that "one of the most important issues we can address in providing pastoral care to our congregations is also at the very heart of the gospel we proclaim - that there is hope beyond this life."²¹¹

Hamilton also points out that mainline Christianity has forgotten "its historic faith, its passion for the gospel, and the power of its traditions."²¹² He affirms that if mainline Christianity can restore the value and the power of the gospel, it will experience God-given revival once again.²¹³ Hamilton is a preacher who has pursued biblical and evangelical preaching like John Wesley.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 14.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 15.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 61.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 61.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 90.

²¹⁰ Ibid., 90.

²¹¹ Ibid., 90.

²¹² Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 203.

²¹³ Ibid., 203.

The Characteristics of Jesus' Preaching

Hamilton argues that preachers today must make the characteristics of Jesus' preaching a part of their preaching.²¹⁴ Hamilton analyzed the following characteristics of Jesus' preaching:

1. Urgency
2. Conviction
3. Proclamation of theological and spiritual truth
4. A clear invitation to respond to the message
5. A basic orientation and conviction that theological truth is always good news
6. Utilized stories from the life experience of the hearers
7. Was surprisingly "seeker sensitive"; that is, Jesus offered grace and compassion to the lost in his message
8. Was prophetic and confrontational toward those who considered themselves religious, challenging such believers to move beyond the letter of the Law to the heart and spirit of the Law
9. Was practical, dealing with real-life issues that people struggled with
10. Taught persons how to connect with God²¹⁵

According to Hamilton's analysis, Jesus preached with urgency and conviction, and proclaimed theological and spiritual truth. He offered grace and compassion to the lost in his message and his message was practical. Hamilton's view is that contemporary pastors should preach like Jesus. They should focus on gospel message so that people today can find true peace and hope in God, and that they can experience comfort and restoration in Christ.

2. The Sermon Preparation of Adam Hamilton

Hamilton believes that the Bible is a starting point for the right preaching.²¹⁶ God

²¹⁴ Ibid., 77.

²¹⁵ Ibid., 77.

²¹⁶ Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*, 12.

reveals to his people his will and messages through the Bible.²¹⁷ Hamilton quotes 2

Timothy 3:14-17:

But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have become convinced of, because you know those from whom you learned it, and how from infancy you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the servant of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work.

Hamilton views salvation as faith in Jesus Christ and the Bible as the foundation of Christian faith. According to Kenneth Carder, the Bible was John Wesley's second language.²¹⁸ Hamilton considers the Bible as life for the Christian faith and preaching like John Wesley.

Hamilton believes that the quality of sermon and the time of sermon preparation have close correlation.²¹⁹ He spends between fifteen and twenty hours every week to prepare his sermon.²²⁰ He uses five to seven hours on Monday for reading the Bible and books.²²¹ On Tuesday, he has another three to four hours to write a first draft of his sermon.²²² On Wednesday and Thursday, he tries to complete his manuscript.²²³ On Saturday, he spends two to three more hours rewriting the final draft of his sermon and he practices it.²²⁴ His goal is to preach without the script and he notes that it is "not that

²¹⁷ Ibid., 12.

²¹⁸ Kenneth L. Carder, "What Difference Does Knowing Wesley Make?" in *Rethinking Wesley's Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 23.

²¹⁹ Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*, 34.

²²⁰ Ibid., 34.

²²¹ Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 94.

²²² Ibid., 94.

²²³ Ibid., 94.

²²⁴ Ibid., 95.

difficult if the sermon has a structure that makes sense.”²²⁵

Hamilton argues why preachers have to have sufficient sermon preparation time:

There is no one activity that a pastor does that can have greater influence on the vitality of the congregation than preaching. If a pastor is a poor preacher and does not devote sufficient time to preparing sermons, the entire congregation will suffer. If a pastor prepares well-researched and thoughtful sermons, with clear relevance and application for her or his congregants, and delivers them with passion, conviction, and clarity, the entire congregation will reap the benefits. Furthermore, in no other activity are so many people affected at one time by the pastor’s ministry as they are during the sermon in Sunday worship. *Since this is the case, there is nothing more important than providing sufficient time to prepare excellent sermons.*²²⁶

Hamilton devotes his time, passion, and energy to excellent preaching. He tries to approach his sermon preparation time as an opportunity to grow in his own faith.²²⁷ He confesses that it is a wonderful blessing that as a preacher he can spend many hours studying the word of God every week.²²⁸ He considers his preaching ministry as an amazing privilege and responsibility.

Hamilton prepares his sermon themes and outlines twenty-four months in advance.²²⁹ He, then, makes specific dates, titles, and basic ideas of his sermons for the next twelve months.²³⁰ In order to develop a long-term preaching plan, he reveals that three things are essential:

1. Time away.
2. An awareness of the needs of your congregation and the issues facing the community

²²⁵ Ibid., 95.

²²⁶ Ibid., 91.

²²⁷ Ibid., 191.

²²⁸ Ibid., 192.

²²⁹ Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*, 20.

²³⁰ Ibid., 20.

and world.

3. Prayer.²³¹

Hamilton explains that he takes two weeks off every July for outlining and planning sermons.²³² During this period he spends almost ninety hours reading, praying, writing, and outlining sermons.²³³ This sufficient sermon preparation time enables his effective preaching. Hamilton stresses that if pastors can prepare their sermons twelve months or six months in advance, their preaching and worship will be more effective and their churches can build a congregation of committed Christians.²³⁴

Hamilton notes that he thinks of a set of questions when he prepares for his sermons:

Where are the people in my church hurting? What are they afraid of or concerned about? Where are they in their faith? Where do they most need to grow? What are the portions of scripture or theological, pastoral, or spiritual subjects I have neglected in my preaching in the last year? How can I help my parishioners grow in their relationship with Christ? How can I help them more effectively live out their faith in the world? What are the needs of the church itself? And, what does God want to say to his children?²³⁵

Hamilton continually studies how he can help and teach his congregations more effectively. Every year Hamilton surveys his congregation “asking about their needs, questions, and concerns that might be addressed in a sermon series.”²³⁶ He always considers the contexts of their lives and their spiritual needs and hunger, and tries to help them with his best efforts.

²³¹ Ibid., 22.

²³² Ibid., 23.

²³³ Ibid., 23.

²³⁴ Ibid., 27.

²³⁵ Ibid., 24.

²³⁶ Adam Hamilton, *Forgiveness* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012), 141.

3. The Christ-Centered Preaching of Adam Hamilton

Why People Need Christ

Hamilton asserts that preachers today have to answer the question, “Why do people need Christ?”²³⁷ He affirms that “Without an answer a church will flounder. Without deep conviction about the responses to these questions, a pastor will never lead a congregation to change the world. But when a pastor, a church leader, or a congregation is clear about the answers, and able to inspire others about the answers to these questions, the power of the church begins to be unleashed.”²³⁸ This question and the answer to this are crucial to preachers because how they think of Jesus determines their direction of preaching and ministry. Hamilton answers the question with the following:

Why do people need Christ? This question strikes at the very heart of the Christian faith. Your picture of who Jesus is will determine in large part how you answer this question. The New Testament offers us a multitude of portraits of Jesus that together help us understand his identity. He is the Son of God, the promised Messiah, the Good Shepherd, and the Savior who lays down his life for the sins of the world. He is the Resurrected Lord, demonstrating his power over sin and death. He rules and reigns in the hearts of his followers and in God’s kingdom eternal. He is the “image of the invisible God,” and the Word made flesh. He is the way, the truth, and the life. And these are just a handful of the biblical pictures of the identity of Jesus.²³⁹

Hamilton has trust and confidence in Jesus Christ and his powerful preaching starts here.

He has a clear understanding of why he preaches and for what he does it.

Hamilton believes that Jesus Christ is “more than a great teacher, more than a prophet. He is the ‘I am,’ the Priest-King who will come one day on the clouds to reign

²³⁷ Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 21.

²³⁸ Ibid., 21.

²³⁹ Ibid., 21.

over all.”²⁴⁰ Hamilton notes that “Why do people need Christ? Because without him we will always be lost and our lives will never realize their God-given potential.”²⁴¹ The reason why Hamilton’s preaching is powerful is that he has his own clear spiritual experiences and his own words, so he expresses them through his sermons with confidence and passion.

For Hamilton, the issue of human salvation is a central topic of his sermons. His preaching starts with human condition and he argues that “for Christians, redemption should always be the goal.”²⁴² Hamilton believes that “The deepest problems facing our society are, at core, spiritual problems.”²⁴³ Life is difficult and complicated so people are hungry for the meaning and the purpose of life. He is convinced that:

Jesus Christ is the solution to the deepest longings of the human heart. He is the answer to the most serious problems that plague our society. When Jesus is Lord and the Holy Spirit enters the heart of the believer, we find the empty places filled, and the dark sides of our soul transformed.²⁴⁴

Hamilton has faith and passion for his message because he has a personal experience that everything in his life has changed through Jesus Christ, and that a relationship with him makes all of life joy-filled and hope-full.²⁴⁵

The Gospel Message

Hamilton tries to preach the gospel message in his every sermon. He preaches in his sermon series, “Forgiveness” with the following:

²⁴⁰ Adam Hamilton, *24 Hours That Changed the World* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2009), 59.

²⁴¹ Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 23.

²⁴² Hamilton, *Forgiveness*, 82.

²⁴³ Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 22.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., 22.

²⁴⁵ Ibid., 22.

In the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible, we find that God provided a whole system by which people could atone for their sins, because God wanted them to be healed and to live in right relationship with him. This theme of forgiveness and atonement is also a central focus of the New Testament. It is the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ: God provided a Savior and offers us forgiveness and a new beginning.²⁴⁶

Hamilton is convinced that God desires to restore the lives of his people and he offers forgiveness and healing through faith in Christ. Hamilton preaches about “the power of the gospel message”²⁴⁷ that:

God, whose love we have spurned and whose ways we have rejected, sends his son to suffer and die to procure and proclaim our forgiveness. We look at the cross and hear Jesus crying out, “Father, forgive them!” This act of mercy, when finally apprehended, has the power to set us free from guilt, to turn us away from our sin and toward the God whose mercy we’ve been offered.²⁴⁸

Hamilton believes that people are desperate for Christ and this is the reason why he focuses on the gospel message. Hamilton preaches to his congregation that “Trust that Jesus has already borne your sins on the cross, and that ‘as far as the east is from the west, so far shall the LORD remove your sin from you’” and stresses that this is “the good news of the Christian gospel.”²⁴⁹

Hamilton preaches about the meaning of the cross and why humans need Christ in his sermons series, “24 Hours That Changed the World” in this way:

Barabbas would be the first sinner for whom Jesus died. This is one small picture of the substitutionary work of atonement Jesus performed with his death; for we, like Barabbas, have been spared, with Jesus suffering the punishment we deserve. Every one of us has sinned, and in our sin we have been alienated from God. Justice calls for punishment for the collective weight of that sin; the Bible says that ‘the wages of sin is death’

²⁴⁶ Hamilton, *Forgiveness*, 16.

²⁴⁷ Ibid., 137.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., 138.

²⁴⁹ Ibid., 32.

(Romans 6:23) and eternal separation from God. But God, who loves us like parents love their children, does not desire us to be eternally separated. God wishes us to receive grace. An ordinary person could not die for all humankind; but Jesus, being God in the flesh, could die for the sins of the entire world. He paid a price he did not owe, giving us a gift of grace we did not deserve. we know there is no way we can save ourselves. It is in those moments when we find ourselves drawn to the cross and the understanding that Christ suffered for us. We look at the cross and realize that a price was already paid for us. We are meant to look at the cross and see both God's great love and the costliness of grace and to find our hearts changed by what God has done for us. We are meant, as a result of understanding that cost, to serve God with humble gratitude, and to long, as we see Jesus suffer, never to sin again.²⁵⁰

Hamilton explains that the suffering and death of Jesus Christ are for human salvation.

Humans can now be forgiven and saved, and can have the right relationship with God.

Jesus Christ was offering himself for the sins of the world and "that death was the vehicle by which God saved the world."²⁵¹ Hamilton stresses that "The suffering, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ represent the pinnacle of the gospel and the completion of God's saving work through Jesus."²⁵²

Preaching Christ

In 2000, Hamilton focused his preaching on the life, work, and teaching of Jesus Christ.²⁵³ He tried to preach his every sermon about Christ in some way.²⁵⁴ He desired people to understand who Jesus Christ is and what it means to believe in him as Savior and Lord.²⁵⁵ Hamilton explains that the role of discipleship preaching is to lead people to a deeper understanding of Jesus Christ, to help them to become deeply committed

²⁵⁰ Hamilton, *24 Hours That Changed the World*, 67-68.

²⁵¹ Ibid., 65.

²⁵² Ibid., 11.

²⁵³ Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*, 79.

²⁵⁴ Ibid., 79.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., 79.

Christians, and to challenge them to go deeper in their faith.²⁵⁶ Hamilton reveals that he found the model for a deeply committed disciple of Jesus Christ on the preaching of John Wesley.²⁵⁷ A deeply committed disciple of Jesus Christ Hamilton found is the one who accepts Him as Lord and Savior, loves and serves God with one's heart and strength.²⁵⁸

Hamilton maintains that “The church belongs to Jesus Christ. He is its Lord. The church is Christ’s body, his representative to the world; a world for which he died.”²⁵⁹ Hamilton argues that “The driving mission of every local church must be to do the things that Jesus wants us to do.”²⁶⁰ He is convinced that the driving passion of today’s churches must be to “seek out and to save the lost” (Luke 19:10).²⁶¹ Because the primary concern of Jesus Christ was to seek out sinners and bring them back to God, and he included this in the Great Commission.²⁶²

4. The Characteristics of Adam Hamilton’s Preaching

Dealing with Real-Life Issues

One of the characteristics of Hamilton’s preaching is addressing issues that are central in Christianity and that people wonder about and are interested in. Hamilton believes that effective preaching is interesting and relevant, and should address real-life issues.²⁶³ He chooses sermon themes such as “Why do bad things happen to good people?” “Why do my prayers go unanswered?” “How do we reconcile the miracles of the Bible

²⁵⁶ Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*, 85.

²⁵⁷ Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 64.

²⁵⁸ Ibid., 64.

²⁵⁹ Ibid., 28.

²⁶⁰ Ibid., 28.

²⁶¹ Ibid., 28.

²⁶² Ibid., 28.

²⁶³ Ibid., 79.

with modern science?” “Is Christianity the only way?” “What about hypocritical

Christians, ungodly preachers, and organized religion?”²⁶⁴

People want to know about Jesus Christ and the Bible more and expect preachers to give them answers. Churched people have many questions about the Bible and their lives, and unchurched people also want to know about Jesus Christ and the meaning of life. Like Wesley who preached the plain truth to plain people, Hamilton’s preaching is effective because, among other things, he takes into consideration the context of people’s lives when he prepares his sermons.

“Altar Call”

Hamilton often offers his congregations an opportunity to think deeply about who Jesus Christ is, receive him, and decide to follow him.²⁶⁵ Hamilton considers the “altar call” valuable. He argues that it is important for preachers to help people actually offer their lives to Christ.²⁶⁶ Hamilton points out that:

We have not always given such an invitation. But my experience in most mainline churches is that, in marketing terms, we never “ask for the sale.” We talk about how wonderful it is to be a Christian, but we never help persons to actually “complete the loop” and give their lives to Christ. We assume this happens at membership, but many of those who have joined our churches have not personally invited Christ into their lives, even if they profess to be Christians with their membership vows.²⁶⁷

Hamilton uses the altar call as a means that his congregations actually can express their desire to be Christians. He believes that the altar call is a tool for action and

²⁶⁴ Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*, 64.

²⁶⁵ Ibid., 64.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., 72.

²⁶⁷ Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 82.

commitment.²⁶⁸ He invites people to receive Jesus Christ at the end of his sermon about once every four to six weeks.²⁶⁹

Hamilton is confident that it is significant to give people an opportunity to respond to the calling of Jesus Christ, “come and follow me.”²⁷⁰ Hamilton believes that “Ultimately being a Christian begins with a decision to accept Jesus as Lord and Savior.”²⁷¹ He reveals that the ultimate goal of his church is “to help people become deeply committed Christians.”²⁷² He stresses that “in a sense, discipleship is a chief aim of every sermon.”²⁷³ He is convinced that the goal of preachers is to teach and help people so that they can continually grow “in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.”²⁷⁴

Preaching on Easter and Christmas

Hamilton notes that Easter and Christmas are great opportunities that unchurched people can attend.²⁷⁵ He, then, points out that unfortunately many pastors do not preach on those days. They invite guest speakers or let associate pastors preach, and tend to focus on Christmas or Easter cantata.²⁷⁶ Hamilton, however, stresses that he prepares for the best sermon he can preach because Christmas or Easter is one of the best

²⁶⁸ Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*, 72.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 72.

²⁷⁰ Ibid., 73.

²⁷¹ Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 64.

²⁷² Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*, 75.

²⁷³ Ibid., 75.

²⁷⁴ Ibid., 77.

²⁷⁵ Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 80.

²⁷⁶ Ibid., 80.

opportunities to deliver the gospel to non-Christians.²⁷⁷ He confesses about his Christmas Eve preaching that:

I have always felt this was the one night I needed to preach, and to preach a very compelling and powerful sermon outlining the significance of Christmas for the lives of those present. I cannot overstate the importance of preparing and preaching an excellent sermon on Christmas Eve. The music and candlelighting alone will carry a service and allow it to be moving to those participating. But a sermon offering peace, hope, joy, and love to those who attend – helping them truly understand their need for God’s gift in Jesus Christ, their need for Christmas – will allow this night to become not merely moving, but life-changing.²⁷⁸

Hamilton is convinced that well-prepared preaching can effectively deliver the Easter message to his congregation.

For Hamilton, in fact, Easter is the Sunday that is the most powerful and the most challenging to preach.²⁷⁹ It is challenging because it is difficult to believe in the resurrection of Jesus.²⁸⁰ Hamilton, however, has faith in the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ and proclaims that he is the Son of God, the King of glory, and the Savior of the world.²⁸¹ Hamilton confesses that:

Every Easter for twenty years I have ended my Easter sermon with the same words: “People ask me, ‘Do you really believe this story of the Resurrection?’ And my answer is always the same. I not only believe it, *I am counting on it.*”²⁸²

Hamilton is convinced that “Easter has the power to change us.”²⁸³

Hamilton explains the meaning of the resurrection of Jesus Christ in this way:

²⁷⁷ Ibid., 80.

²⁷⁸ Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*, 118.

²⁷⁹ Hamilton, *24 Hours That Changed the World*, 123.

²⁸⁰ Ibid., 123.

²⁸¹ Ibid., 124.

²⁸² Ibid., 132.

²⁸³ Ibid., 124.

The Resurrection is not simply about a dead man being restored to life. Its power lies in its meaning, and here the Resurrection seems to me to be the perfect and essential ending to the gospel story. The Resurrection of Christ, like his crucifixion, is a word from God speaking a profound truth that changes everything. This story defined the very lives of the earliest disciples. The apostle Paul summarized the role of the Resurrection in the gospel message in this way: “If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9).²⁸⁴

Hamilton considers the Resurrection important and it has a profound message for Christians. He argues that “Christ’s resurrection is a vindication of his message, his identity, and his death on the cross.”²⁸⁵ Hamilton points out that Jesus “claimed to be the Messiah, the Son of the living God,”²⁸⁶ and that the resurrection of Jesus “fulfilled a divine purpose, bringing about the forgiveness of sins.”²⁸⁷

Hamilton has a special passion for Christmas and Easter preaching. He notes that:

My hope is to teach and inspire the unchurched to want to know more about Christ. My hope is to be used by the Holy Spirit to create in the unchurched a deep hunger to want to know more.²⁸⁸

One of the secrets of his phenomenal church growth is that he has completely targeted unchurched people not only to stop by the church but also to become Christians through his passionate sermons on Easter and Christmas.

Holy Communion as Means of Grace

Hamilton suggests that Christians can experience God’s love and grace through

²⁸⁴ Ibid., 126.

²⁸⁵ Ibid., 128.

²⁸⁶ Ibid., 129.

²⁸⁷ Ibid., 129.

²⁸⁸ Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 80.

Holy Communion and that their lives would be restored.²⁸⁹ He points out the importance of Holy Communion in this way:

When Jesus said, “This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins” (Matthew 26:28), he changed everything. He transformed the Passover Seder, giving to all people instead the Eucharist: Holy Communion. The Israelites had become a covenant people by the blood of animals; the Last Supper was the establishment of the new covenant by the blood of Jesus, not only with the tribes of Israel, but with all humanity. Where the Seder was once the story of God’s liberation of the Israelite slaves, it was from this time forward the story of God’s liberation of all humankind from slavery to sin and death. In that moment, God gave the entire human race new life and a new beginning and made those who choose to follow Jesus into his people, his bride. In this meal and through his death and resurrection, Jesus invited all humankind to become God’s covenant people.²⁹⁰

Hamilton believes that Holy Communion is significant for a Christian life and it has a power to restore the lives of people and renew their faith.

Hamilton emphasizes the meaning and the value of Holy Communion with the following:

In transforming the Passover into the Eucharist, I believe Jesus was expecting this meal to define who we are. Through it, we remember that someone saved us; that our freedom came at the cost of a person; that God, walking in human flesh, suffered and died for us. This is the story we remember. It is a big story, and we have to get it if we are going to be a follower of Jesus Christ. We must see ourselves there at that supper and at that cross, knowing it was for each of us that Jesus died. Every time we take the bread and wine, we remember; and it reshapes us. It reminds us where we came from, and it defines who we are and who we will be. It is the remembrance, for Christians, of our birth as a people. We come into that meal remembering that we were slaves to sin and death, living for ourselves and on our own. We leave that meal free, knowing our Savior, choosing to follow him, accepting his grace and mercy in our lives. It is a celebratory event, filled with joy because it represents our salvation. We call it “Eucharist” from the Greek word for thanksgiving. It is a profound

²⁸⁹ Hamilton, *24 Hours That Changed the World*, 25.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 25.

and holy meal, filled with good news. That is how it is meant to affect us.²⁹¹

Christians can remember the event of redemption on the Cross and depend on Christ who died for them through Holy Communion. Hamilton points out that Holy Communion is a perfect opportunity to give people an invitation to accept Jesus Christ.²⁹² He explains in this way:

“For in the act of Holy Communion we ask persons to come forward, and to visibly, tangibly, invite Christ into their lives, and to symbolize their acceptance of his death on the cross for their sins, his grace, and his presence in their lives, as they eat the bread and drink the wine.”²⁹³

Hamilton introduces how he says after the Great Thanksgiving for his congregation: “This meal is your opportunity to express to God your desire to live for Christ, to receive Christ into your life, and to accept his mercy and grace. When you take the bread and the wine take this as an opportunity to rededicate your life to him.”²⁹⁴ Hamilton emphasizes that this invitation has helped a lot of people as a “means of grace” like John Wesley taught.²⁹⁵ Wesley emphasized the importance of Holy Communion to his followers, and he participated in Holy Communion at least once a week, often in a pattern of once every five days.²⁹⁶

²⁹¹ Ibid., 26-27.

²⁹² Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 83.

²⁹³ Ibid., 83.

²⁹⁴ Ibid., 83.

²⁹⁵ Ibid., 83.

²⁹⁶ Collins, 262.

Chapter Five. The Project

Introduction

This project undertakes to design a three-session seminar for young Korean Methodist pastors in Southern California that will help them to have greater understanding of John Wesley's practical theology and preaching and apply them to their sermons. The first session of the project explores John Wesley's practical theology. It studies why Wesley's theology is "practical" theology. It also covers Wesley's thoughts on preventient grace, justification, regeneration, sanctification, and Christian perfection.

The second session of the project deals with John Wesley's preaching. It discusses the characteristics of Wesley's preaching and his preaching philosophy. It also summarizes and analyzes his main sermons including Salvation by Faith (Sermon 1), The Almost Christian (Sermon 2), Justification by Faith (Sermon 5), The Marks of the New Birth (Sermon 18), The Lord Our Righteousness (Sermon 20), Christian Perfection (Sermon 40), and On Working Out Our Own Salvation (Sermon 85).

The last session of the project explores the preaching of Adam Hamilton. It suggests his preaching as a model for contemporary Korean Methodist preachers. It extrapolates how his preaching is part of the Wesleyan theological and homiletical tradition, which has helped make him one of the most influential United Methodist preachers today.

Session One. John Wesley's Practical Theology

1. Interpreting Wesley's theology as "practical" theology

Wesley's chief concern was to know God and to proclaim the truth of God made known in Jesus Christ.²⁹⁷ Kenneth Carder asserts that "Wesley's preoccupation with theology served an evangelical and transformative purpose. Theology was a matter of life and death to him, not a subject of non-passionate academic speculation."²⁹⁸ Wesley pursued a practical and actual theology and believed that it can "transform personal life and social relations."²⁹⁹ This was his "practical divinity."

Wesley's theology is utterly for the Christian life and his consistent concern was how humans could get to heaven. He desired to know the way to heaven all his life. Wesley truly pursued the essential issue of salvation, not philosophical or abstract issues. This is why Wesley used the term, "plain old Bible divinity" or "practical divinity" rather than "theology" in his writings.³⁰⁰ Thomas Langford points out that "Wesley's primary concern throughout his development was with human salvation. Around this hub his thought was extended like spokes."³⁰¹

²⁹⁷ Kenneth L. Carder, "What Difference Does Knowing Wesley Make?" in *Rethinking Wesley's Theology: for Contemporary Methodism*, ed. Randy L. Maddox (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 23.

²⁹⁸ Carder, 24.

²⁹⁹ Thomas A. Langford, "John Wesley and Theological Method," in *Rethinking Wesley's Theology: for Contemporary Methodism*, ed. Randy L. Maddox (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 35.

³⁰⁰ Kenneth J. Collins, *The Theology of John Wesley: Holy Love and the Shape of Grace* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007), 2.

³⁰¹ Thomas A. Langford, "John Wesley and Theological Method," in *Rethinking Wesley's Theology: for Contemporary Methodism*, ed. Randy L. Maddox (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 38.

2. What is Prevenient Grace?

Prevenient grace is God's action of going before us and drawing us to desire the things of God. In his sermon, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," Wesley defines prevenient grace as:

all the drawings of the Father; the desires after God, which, if we yield to them, increase more and more; --all that light wherewith the Son of God "enlighteneth every one that cometh into the world;" showing every man "to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with his God"; --all the convictions which His Spirit, from time to time, works in every child of man--although it is true, the generality of men stifle them as soon as possible, and after a while forget, or at least deny, that they ever had them at all.³⁰²

Wesley used the term "preventing" rather than "prevailing" in this sermon and he teaches that salvation begins with preventing grace.³⁰³ Preventing grace includes the first wish to please God and the first slight conviction of having sinned against God.³⁰⁴ Wesley notes that everyone has a natural conscience and this is not natural, so it is more properly termed preventing grace.³⁰⁵ Humans have a greater or lesser measure of this. Humans are corrupted by sin, yet prevenient grace enables them to believe in God and prevents them from sinning. Prevenient grace surrounds all humans and allows them to cooperate with saving grace.

Collins notes that Wesley highlights five benefits of prevenient grace in his

³⁰² John Wesley, Sermon 43, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," I. 2, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 373.

³⁰³ John Wesley, Sermon 85, "On Working out our own Salvation," II. 1, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 488.

³⁰⁴ Wesley, Sermon 85, "On Working out our own Salvation," II. 1, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 488.

³⁰⁵ Wesley, "On Working out our own Salvation," III. 4, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 491.

writings.³⁰⁶ They are (i) Basic knowledge of the attributes of God, (ii) Re-inscription of the moral law, (iii) Conscience, (iv) A measure of free will graciously restored, and (v) The restraint of wickedness.”³⁰⁷ First, Wesley notes that a basic knowledge of the attributes of God is revealed to all humans “as a result of the prevenient agency of the Holy Spirit.”³⁰⁸ Humans, therefore, came to have at least some understanding of God. Second, Wesley asserts that God re-inscribes a knowledge of the moral law on humans’ hearts through prevenient grace.³⁰⁹ Third, Wesley indicates that conscience has its ultimate origin in God, and is also a special gift from God.³¹⁰ Fourth, Wesley maintains that “the will of man is by nature free only to evil” but a measure of human free will is restored by the grace of God.³¹¹ Lastly, Wesley believes that to some extent, the prevenient grace of God is able to restrain people from evil conduct.

3. What is Justification?

Wesley asserts that justification through Christ is the nature of Christianity in his sermon, “The Lord our Righteousness.” As Fred Sanders points out, Wesley’s teaching on justification “was a matter of great and passionate emphasis. It was an electrifying doctrine for him, never one to be taken for granted.”³¹² Wesley agrees with Luther that the doctrine of justification is the article on which the church stands or falls. For Wesley, this doctrine is “certainly the pillar and ground of that faith, of which alone cometh

³⁰⁶ Collins, 77.

³⁰⁷ Ibid., 78.

³⁰⁸ Ibid., 77.

³⁰⁹ Ibid., 77.

³¹⁰ Ibid., 77.

³¹¹ Ibid., 79.

³¹² Fred Sanders, *Wesley on the Christian Life* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2013), 134.

salvation.”³¹³

According to Wesley, “Justification is another word for pardon,” and “the meritorious cause of our justification is the blood and righteousness of Christ.”³¹⁴ Wesley affirms that the ultimate end of Christianity is salvation and the means to attain it is faith.³¹⁵ For Wesley, two words, faith and salvation are “the substance of all the Bible” and “the marrow of the whole Scripture.”³¹⁶ Wesley explains that faith is the only condition of justification.³¹⁷ Faith alone is sufficient for justification. Everyone who believes is justified.

Wesley defines Justifying faith as “a sure trust and confidence that Christ died for ‘my’ sins, that he loved ‘me,’ and gave himself for ‘me.’”³¹⁸ Faith is a certain trust and confidence that God forgives my sins and accepts me through the merits of Christ. It is a daring confidence that Christ loved me and gave himself for me, and that I am redeemed by the blood of Christ.

As Collins points out, for Wesley, “imputation is a testament to the sheer grace and utter favor of God in forgiving sinners.”³¹⁹ In the very moment they believe in Christ as their Lord and Savior, the righteousness of Christ is imputed. Wesley believes that “faith and the righteousness of Christ are inseparable.”³²⁰ Believing is to believe in the

³¹³ John Wesley, Sermon 20, “The Lord our Righteousness,” 4, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 383.

³¹⁴ John Wesley, Sermon 43, “The Scripture Way of Salvation,” I. 3, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 373.

³¹⁵ Wesley, Sermon 43, “The Scripture Way of Salvation,” 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 372.

³¹⁶ Wesley, “The Scripture Way of Salvation,” 2, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 373.

³¹⁷ Ibid., III. 1, 375.

³¹⁸ John Wesley, Sermon 5, “Justification by Faith,” IV. 2, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 118.

³¹⁹ Collins, 175.

³²⁰ Wesley, Sermon 20, “The Lord our Righteousness,” II. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 385.

righteousness of Christ. There is no justifying faith apart from the righteousness of Christ.

Wesley believes that humans are forgiven and accepted only by what Christ has done on the cross. This is biblical teaching that "by grace you are saved through faith, not of works, lest any man should boast"(Eph. 2:8). People are justified by faith, not by works.

4. What is Sanctification?

Wesley argues that believers are sanctified by faith. It is exactly the same as when humans are justified by faith. Thus, "faith is the condition, and the only condition, of sanctification, exactly as it is of justification."³²¹ All believers are sanctified, and without faith, no one is sanctified.

Wesley affirms that faith alone is sufficient for sanctification.³²² Anyone who believes is sanctified. Wesley, however, also acknowledges that all believers who are justified have to be zealous of good works.³²³ He teaches that good works which reflect the life of sanctification are first, all works of piety: such as prayers, the supper of the Lord, Bible reading, and fasting. Secondly, all works of mercy: such as feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, entertaining the stranger, visiting those that are in prison, or sick.³²⁴ Wesley teaches that these are the fruits of true repentance and are necessary to full sanctification.³²⁵

Wesley argues that holiness and good works are an immediate fruit of the faith

³²¹ Wesley, "The Scripture Way of Salvation," III. 3, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 376.

³²² Ibid., III. 3. 376.

³²³ Ibid., III. 5, 377.

³²⁴ Ibid., III. 9, 378.

³²⁵ Ibid., III. 10, 378.

whereby believers are justified.³²⁶ Thus, if good works do not follow faith, it is plain that the faith is worth nothing. A good tree brings forth good fruit. Wesley defines holiness as being cleansed from filthiness both of flesh and spirit. It is also to be perfect as God is perfect.³²⁷ Wesley affirms that believers should always strive to be holy because their bodies are the temple of God.

For Wesley, loving God with all one's heart, soul, and mind is the sum of sanctification. Sanctification is all comprised in one word, Love. 1 Peter 1:15 says, ". . . as he who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct . . . You shall be holy, for I am holy." Wesley points to the epistle for the most powerful expression concerning perfection: "May the God of peace sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thess. 5:23).

5. What is Christian Perfection?

Christian Perfection is one of the most important thoughts of John Wesley. Some may argue that Christian perfection is life without sin or the perfect life. However, Wesley's Christian perfection is the life of holy love toward God and others in the Holy Spirit.

Wesley's Christian perfection is perfect love. It is love rejoicing always, praying without ceasing, and giving thanks in everything. Wesley affirms that without love, all

³²⁶ John Wesley, Sermon 35, "The Law Established Through Faith: Discourse One," II. 6, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 272.

³²⁷ John Wesley, Sermon 17, "The Circumcision of the Heart," I. 1, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 25.

we know, all we believe, and all we do are meaningless.³²⁸ The love which God requires in humans is the love of God and humanity. To love God is to delight in him, to desire continually to please him, and to seek happiness in him.

Wesley also asserts that Christian perfection is only another term for holiness.³²⁹ Everyone who is perfect is holy, and everyone who is holy is perfect. There is no absolute perfection on earth. Christians should grow in grace and the knowledge of God. They are saved by faith, and made holy. Believers who are justified by grace through faith should pursue entire sanctification. It is for a full salvation from all sins.

Wesley acknowledges the limitations of human nature. He notes that “(humans) are not perfect in knowledge. They are not free from ignorance, no, nor from mistake.”³³⁰ Wesley does not deny the limitations of humans. Humans are not perfect, yet Wesley believes that they can live the life free from evil thoughts and tempers. Wesley does not claim that Christian perfection is a sinless life nor Christians can live a sinless life.³³¹ Wesley’s Christian perfection is the life that is cleansed from all filthiness of flesh and spirit. Wesley never used the phrase “sinless perfection.” For Wesley, Christian perfection is the pure and holy love toward God and others in the Holy Spirit.

³²⁸ John Wesley, Sermon 89, “The More Excellent Way,” I. 4, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 513.

³²⁹ John Wesley, Sermon 40, “Christian Perfection,” I. 9, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 73.

³³⁰ Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, 23-26.

³³¹ Wesley, *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection*, 54.

Session Two. The Preaching of John Wesley

1. The characteristics and philosophy of Wesley's preaching

According to Outler, Wesley was by no means the most excellent preacher of his time.³³² People were not moved by his eloquence. However, Wesley's message, that clearly revealed the gospel, touched them.³³³ Wesley was an itinerant preacher and he mainly preached to workers. For each sermon, Wesley was convinced that he "should proclaim the essential gospel as if for that one time only."³³⁴ Wesley, therefore, thoroughly focused on the gospel message whenever he preached.

Langford notes that one of the characteristics of Wesley's preaching is "the dynamic interaction between speaking the message and life-changing reception of the message."³³⁵ He suggests that Wesley through his "preaching intends to evoke response; the gospel is proclaimed in order to transform life."³³⁶ Wesley's preaching philosophy is "to invite, to convince, to offer Christ, to build up, and to do this in every sermon."³³⁷ In summary, Wesley's preaching is scriptural, soteriological, evangelical, practical, pastoral, and deeply experiential.

2. Wesley's Sermon: Salvation by Faith

Wesley's first sermon, "Salvation by Faith" is significant because it reflects his radical change of heart and thought after his Aldersgate experience on May 24, 1738.³³⁸

³³² Albert C. Outler, *John Wesley's Sermons: An Introduction* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991), 26.

³³³ Outler, 27.

³³⁴ Ibid., 26.

³³⁵ Langford, 37.

³³⁶ Ibid., 37.

³³⁷ Outler, 26.

³³⁸ Ibid., 39.

Wesley started to preach a ‘new gospel’ (‘salvation by faith alone’) after the experience.³³⁹ He began with his preaching ministry after his assurance of salvation and his understanding of saving faith and justification.³⁴⁰ The sermon “Salvation by Faith” is the great monument of Wesley’s sermons.³⁴¹

(i) What is the central teaching of Wesley’s sermon, “Salvation by Faith?”

Wesley understands that humans are “all unholy and sinful themselves,” so they need “a fresh atonement.”³⁴² Humans are totally corrupt and cannot atone for their sins with their own works. Wesley stresses that “Grace is the source, faith the condition, of salvation.”³⁴³

Wesley then explains what kind of faith is necessary for salvation. According to Wesley, the faith of salvation is a faith in Christ.³⁴⁴ Wesley makes it clear that this faith is not mere intellectual assent, but a faith of the heart.³⁴⁵ This is why Wesley talks about Christianity as a religion of the heart.

(ii) How does Wesley define Christian faith in his sermon, “Salvation by Faith?”

Christian faith is not only an assent to the whole gospel of Christ, but also a full reliance on the blood of Christ; a trust in the merits of his life, death, and resurrection; a recumbency upon him as our atonement and our life, as given for us, and living in us; and,

³³⁹ Ibid., 39.

³⁴⁰ Sanders, 59.

³⁴¹ Ibid., 59.

³⁴² John Wesley, Sermon 1, “Salvation by Faith,” 2, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 40.

³⁴³ Wesley, Sermon 1, “Salvation by Faith,” 3, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 40.

³⁴⁴ Wesley, “Salvation by Faith,” I. 4., in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 41.

³⁴⁵ Ibid., I. 4, 41.

in consequence hereof, a closing with him, and cleaving to him, as our ‘wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption,’ or, in one word, our salvation.³⁴⁶

(iii) What is saving faith in Wesley’s sermon, “Salvation by Faith?”

Saving faith is a complete reliance on Christ and a trust in what he has done for humans, and is certain that Christ became their own wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption.

3. Wesley’s Sermon: The Almost Christian

Wesley points out that there are the “almost Christian” and the “altogether Christian.” The first characteristic of the “altogether Christian” is that they love God with all their heart, mind, and soul. The second characteristic of the “altogether Christian” is that they love their neighbors. For Wesley, love is the most vital feature of the “altogether Christian.” The “altogether Christian” loves God and neighbors. Wesley also considers faith as a crucial feature of the “altogether Christian.”

The “almost Christian” has a form of godliness. They pray, read the Bible, and even fast regularly. However, they do not love God with their all heart, mind, and soul. They do not love their neighbors as themselves.

4. Wesley’s Sermon: Justification by Faith

Wesley’s preaching on justification is among his most immediate and most powerful. Justification is not just another doctrine for him, but the word of salvation, the very thing that must be presented to his audience. He seems aware that this message of

³⁴⁶ Ibid., I. 5, 42.

justification is the word that can spark immediate response, and he preaches with fervor that speaks to us across the generations.³⁴⁷ For Wesley, the doctrine of justification is vital for the Christian life and he tried to explain about what justification is and how humans can be justified in this sermon, “Justification by Faith.”

(i) What is Justification?

According to Wesley, justification is “not the being made actually just and righteous,”³⁴⁸ for he calls that “sanctification,”³⁴⁹ but Wesley explains that justification is what God does for us through Jesus Christ, and sanctification is what God works in us through the Holy Spirit.³⁵⁰ Wesley clearly states that the definite biblical teaching of justification is the forgiveness of sins.³⁵¹ Because Christ died on the cross carrying human sins, God reckons believers righteous who admit that they are sinners and need Christ for their salvation.³⁵² God forgives all the sins of believers freely.

(ii) What does it mean to be justified by Faith alone?

Wesley explains how humans are justified before the righteous God. It is by faith alone.³⁵³ According to Wesley, this Justifying faith is a confident trust that Christ died for humanity and gave himself up because he loved us as Galatians 2:20 states.³⁵⁴ For

³⁴⁷ Sanders, 132-133.

³⁴⁸ John Wesley, Sermon 5, “Justification by Faith,” II. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 114.

³⁴⁹ Wesley, Sermon 5, “Justification by Faith,” II. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 114.

³⁵⁰ Wesley, “Justification by Faith,” II. 1, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 114.

³⁵¹ Ibid., II. 5, 115.

³⁵² Ibid., II. 5, 115.

³⁵³ Ibid., IV. 1, 118.

³⁵⁴ Ibid., IV. 2, 118.

Wesley, it is clear that "the only instrument of salvation" is faith.³⁵⁵ Wesley defines faith as "a sure trust and confidence that God both has and will forgive our sins, that he has accepted us again into His favor, for the merits of Christ's death and passion."³⁵⁶ Wesley is confident that faith is the "only necessary" condition of justification.³⁵⁷

5. Wesley's Sermon: The Marks of New Birth

Wesley preaches that the foundation mark of the new birth is faith.³⁵⁸ The true Christian faith is beyond a bare assent or an understanding; it is a sure trust and confidence in God through the merits of Christ that one's sins are forgiven and they are accepted as children of God.³⁵⁹

Wesley notes that the paramount mark of the new birth is love.³⁶⁰ Loving God and loving neighbors are crucial fruit of the new birth. Wesley stresses that believers have to love all people including their enemies.³⁶¹ Those who are born again have a sure trust and confidence that they believe in Jesus Christ, absolutely depend on his blood and righteousness, and are forgiven and accepted by God's grace and mercy. They also do love God and their neighbors as He commanded.

6. Wesley's Sermon: The Lord Our Righteousness

(i) What are the two kinds of righteousness?

³⁵⁵ Ibid., IV. 3, 118.

³⁵⁶ Ibid., IV. 3, 118.

³⁵⁷ Ibid., IV. 5, 119.

³⁵⁸ John Wesley, Sermon 18, "The Marks of the New Birth," I. 1, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 174.

³⁵⁹ Wesley, Sermon 18, "The Marks of the New Birth," I. 3, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 175.

³⁶⁰ Wesley, "The Marks of the New Birth," III. 1, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 179.

³⁶¹ Ibid., III. 3, 179.

The righteousness of Christ is twofold, his divine or his human righteousness. His divine righteousness belongs to his divine nature. This is his eternal, essential holiness and his infinite justice, mercy, and truth. Wesley makes it clear that this divine nature of Christ is not imputed to believers, but his human righteousness is.³⁶² The human righteousness of Christ belongs to him in his human nature. He is the Mediator between God and humanity. He did the will of God on earth and fulfilled all righteousness. Therefore, Jesus is called "the Lord our righteousness."³⁶³

(ii) In what sense is the Righteousness of Christ imputed to Believers?

All believers are forgiven and accepted, not by their own righteousness or works, but only by what Christ has done for them. Humans are justified freely by God's grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.³⁶⁴ For Wesley, the expressions that we are justified by the grace of God and that Christ is our righteousness are the same thing.³⁶⁵ Wesley affirms that the righteousness of Christ is the whole and sole foundation of all our hope.

7. Wesley's Sermon: Christian Perfection

For Wesley, Christian perfection is "only another term for holiness."³⁶⁶ He notes that Christian perfection and holiness "are two names for the same thing."³⁶⁷ Wesley

³⁶² John Wesley, Sermon 20, "The Lord our Righteousness," I. 1, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 384.

³⁶³ Wesley, Sermon 20, "The Lord our Righteousness," I. 2-4, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 385.

³⁶⁴ Wesley, "The Lord our Righteousness," II. 5, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 386.

³⁶⁵ Ibid., II. 9, 387.

³⁶⁶ John Wesley, Sermon 40, "Christian Perfection," I. 9, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 73.

³⁶⁷ Wesley, Sermon 40, "Christian Perfection," I. 9, in *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*, 73.

argues that everyone who is perfect is holy, and everyone who is holy is perfect.³⁶⁸

Christian perfection, however, is not a sinless life. Wesley never used the phrase “sinless perfection.”

8. Wesley’s Sermon: On Working Out Our Own Salvation

Humans have to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling. Believers should avoid all evil works, and do their best to do good works, including works of piety, works of mercy, prayers, fasting, reading the Bible, and partaking of the Lord's Supper.³⁶⁹ Wesley stresses that those who are redeemed by the blood of Christ should go on to perfection.³⁷⁰ Wesley highlights the fact that “First, God works; therefore you can work. Secondly, God works, therefore you must work.”³⁷¹

³⁶⁸ Wesley, “Christian Perfection,” I. 9, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 73.

³⁶⁹ John Wesley, Sermon 85, “On Working Out Our Own Salvation,” II. 4, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 489.

³⁷⁰ Wesley, Sermon 85, “On Working Out Our Own Salvation,” II. 4, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 489.

³⁷¹ Wesley, “On Working Out Our Own Salvation,” III. 2, in *John Wesley’s Sermons: An Anthology*, 490.

Session Three. The Preaching of Adam Hamilton

Adam Hamilton is the founding pastor of the United Methodist Church of the Resurrection in Leawood, Kansas. The church began with his family alone in 1990 but became the largest United Methodist Church in the United States. It has over 20,000 memberships and an average weekend worship attendance of 15,000.

According to James C. Logan, “The United Methodist Church, once the largest denomination of the Protestant establishment, began to report a decline in gross membership in the 1960’s. Between the years 1970 and 1984 the denomination lost an average of 1,930 members every week!”³⁷² In light of the fact that a lot of churches and seminaries are experiencing financial hardship and reduced attendance today, Hamilton’s ministry is outstanding and contemporary pastors can learn much from his preaching ministry. Hamilton reveals that the secret of his remarkable church growth is that “much of our approach at Church of the Resurrection is simply an adaptation of what John Wesley did 250 years ago.”³⁷³ Hamilton’s preaching is powerful, and most importantly, is based on Wesley’s practical theology and preaching.

1. Effective Preaching

Hamilton believes that “the world needs preachers” and “preaching is important.” The church is still the hope of the world and people want to listen to the word of God. Hamilton affirms that people today are thirsty for hope and the meaning of life, and are

³⁷² James C. Logan, “Offering Christ: Wesleyan Evangelism Today,” in *Rethinking Wesley’s Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998), 114.

³⁷³ Adam Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 203.

hungry for a word from God, so effective preaching is absolutely needed.³⁷⁴

What is effective preaching? According to Hamilton, “effective sermons are interesting, relevant, biblical, understandable, offer clear application to the hearer’s daily life, address real-life issues, and are preached with conviction, passion, love, integrity, and humility.”³⁷⁵ It is significant that Hamilton points out that preaching should be interesting and relevant. Because people today tend to consider sermons boring and irrelevant to their everyday lives, pastors should preach interestingly and relevantly. It is also important that Hamilton stresses that pastors have to preach with confidence, passion, love, integrity, and humility. These are essential attitudes that every preacher should remember. Preachers should have confidence in their messages and deliver them with passion, love, integrity, and humility.

2. The Purpose of Preaching

The purpose of the preaching of Hamilton is to “build a Christian community where non-religious and nominally religious people are becoming deeply committed Christians.”³⁷⁶ What does a deeply committed Christian look like? Hamilton notes that a deeply committed Christian is the one who loves God with all one’s heart, soul, and mind, and loves one’s neighbor as oneself.

3. Five Domains of Preaching

Hamilton identifies five dimensions of his preaching: Evangelism, Discipleship,

³⁷⁴ Adam Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2003), 10.

³⁷⁵ Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 79.

³⁷⁶ Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*, 14.

Pastoral Care, Equipping and Sending, and Institutional Development.³⁷⁷ As a preacher, he hopes to help and deepen the faith of Christians through his evangelistic sermons.

4. The Characteristics of Jesus' Preaching

Hamilton argues that preachers today must take the characteristics of Jesus' preaching as part of their preaching. Hamilton analyzed the following characteristics of Jesus' preaching:

1. Urgency
2. Conviction
3. Proclamation of theological and spiritual truth
4. A clear invitation to respond to the message
5. A basic orientation and conviction that theological truth is always good news
6. Utilized stories from the life experience of the hearers
7. Was surprisingly "seeker sensitive"; that is, Jesus offered grace and compassion to the lost in his message
8. Was prophetic and confrontational toward those who considered themselves religious, challenging such believers to move beyond the letter of the Law to the heart and spirit of the Law
9. Was practical, dealing with real-life issues that people struggled with
10. Taught persons how to connect with God³⁷⁸

According to Hamilton's analysis, Jesus preached with urgency and conviction, and proclaimed theological and spiritual truth. He offered grace and compassion to the lost in his message and his message was practical. Hamilton's view is that contemporary pastors should preach like Jesus. They should focus on gospel message so that people today can find true peace and hope in God, and that they can experience comfort and restoration in Christ.

³⁷⁷ Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*, 61.

³⁷⁸ Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 77.

5. Sermon Preparation

Hamilton believes that the quality of sermon and the time of sermon preparation have close correlation. He spends between fifteen and twenty hours every week to prepare his sermon. He uses five to seven hours on Monday for reading the Bible and books. On Tuesday, he has another three to four hours to write a first draft of his sermon. On Wednesday and Thursday, he tries to complete his manuscript. On Saturday, he spends two to three more hours rewriting the final draft of his sermon and he practices it. His goal is to preach without the script and he notes that it is “not that difficult if the sermon has a structure that makes sense.”³⁷⁹

In terms of sermon preparation, Hamilton declares:

There is no one activity that a pastor does that can have greater influence on the vitality of the congregation than preaching. If a pastor is a poor preacher and does not devote sufficient time to preparing sermons, the entire congregation will suffer. If a pastor prepares well-researched and thoughtful sermons, with clear relevance and application for her or his congregants, and delivers them with passion, conviction, and clarity, the entire congregation will reap the benefits. Furthermore, in no other activity are so many people affected at one time by the pastor’s ministry as they are during the sermon in Sunday worship. *Since this is the case, there is nothing more important than providing sufficient time to prepare excellent sermons.*³⁸⁰

Hamilton devotes his time, passion, and energy to excellent preaching. He tries to approach his sermon preparation time as an opportunity to grow in his own faith.³⁸¹ He confesses that it is a wonderful blessing that as a preacher he can spend many hours studying the word of God every week.³⁸² He considers his preaching ministry as an

³⁷⁹ Ibid., 95.

³⁸⁰ Ibid., 91.

³⁸¹ Ibid., 191.

³⁸² Ibid., 192.

amazing privilege and responsibility.

Hamilton notes that he is guided by a set of questions when he prepares for his sermons:

Where are the people in my church hurting? What are they afraid of or concerned about? Where are they in their faith? Where do they most need to grow? What are the portions of scripture or theological, pastoral, or spiritual subjects I have neglected in my preaching in the last year? How can I help my parishioners grow in their relationship with Christ? How can I help them more effectively live out their faith in the world? What are the needs of the church itself? And, what does God want to say to his children?³⁸³

Hamilton continually studies how he can help and teach his congregations more effectively. Every year Hamilton surveys his congregation “asking about their needs, questions, and concerns that might be addressed in a sermon series.”³⁸⁴ He always considers the place of their lives and their spiritual needs and hunger, and tries to help them with his best efforts.

6. Two Dimensions of Hamilton’s Preaching

(I) Preaching Christ

(a) Why do people need Christ?

Hamilton asserts that preachers today have to answer the question, “Why do people need Christ?” He affirms that “Without an answer a church will flounder. Without deep conviction about the responses to these questions, a pastor will never lead a congregation to change the world. But when a pastor, a church leader, or a congregation is clear about the answers, and able to inspire others about the answers to these questions,

³⁸³ Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*, 24.

³⁸⁴ Adam Hamilton, *Forgiveness* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2012), 141.

the power of the church begins to be unleashed.”³⁸⁵ This question and the answer to this are crucial to preachers because how they think of Jesus determines their direction of preaching and ministry. Here is what Hamilton answers the question:

Why do people need Christ? This question strikes at the very heart of the Christian faith. Your picture of who Jesus is will determine in large part how you answer this question. The New Testament offers us a multitude of portraits of Jesus that together help us understand his identity. He is the Son of God, the promised Messiah, the Good Shepherd, and the Savior who lays down his life for the sins of the world. He is the Resurrected Lord, demonstrating his power over sin and death. He rules and reigns in the hearts of his followers and in God’s kingdom eternal. He is the “image of the invisible God,” and the Word made flesh. He is the way, the truth, and the life. And these are just a handful of the biblical pictures of the identity of Jesus.³⁸⁶

Hamilton has trust and confidence in Jesus Christ and his powerful preaching starts here.

He has a clear understanding of why he preaches and for what he does it.

(b) Why is Jesus Christ the Answer?

Hamilton believes that “The deepest problems facing our society are, at core, spiritual problems.”³⁸⁷ Life is difficult and complicated so people are hungry for the meaning and the purpose of life. He is convinced that:

Jesus Christ is the solution to the deepest longings of the human heart. He is the answer to the most serious problems that plague our society. When Jesus is Lord and the Holy Spirit enters the heart of the believer, we find the empty places filled, and the dark sides of our soul transformed.³⁸⁸

(II) Dealing with Real-Life Issues

³⁸⁵ Hamilton, *Leading Beyond the Walls*, 21.

³⁸⁶ Ibid., 21.

³⁸⁷ Ibid., 22.

³⁸⁸ Ibid., 22.

One of the characteristics of Hamilton's preaching is that he enjoys dealing with issues that are central in Christianity and that people are wondered and interested in. Hamilton believes that effective preaching is interesting and relevant, and should address real-life issues.³⁸⁹ He chooses his sermon themes like "Why do bad things happen to good people?" "Why do my prayers go unanswered?" "How do we reconcile the miracles of the Bible with modern science?" "Is Christianity the only way?" "What about hypocritical Christians, ungodly preachers, and organized religion?"³⁹⁰

People want to know about Jesus Christ and the Bible more and expect preachers to give them answers. Churched people have many questions about the Bible and their lives, and unchurched people also want to know about Jesus Christ and the meaning of life. One of the reasons how Hamilton's preaching is effectively communicated with his congregations is that he always tries to consider the place of their lives when he prepares for his sermons.

³⁸⁹ Ibid., 79.

³⁹⁰ Hamilton, *Unleashing the Word*, 64.

Evaluation

The project was designed to help young Korean Methodist pastors in Southern California to have greater understanding of John Wesley's practical theology and preaching and apply them to their sermons. It was designed to explore Wesley's practical theology including his thoughts on prevenient grace, justification, regeneration, sanctification, and Christian perfection. It also discussed Wesley's preaching. It summarized and analyzed Wesley's main sermons including Salvation by Faith (Sermon 1), The Almost Christian (Sermon 2), Justification by Faith (Sermon 5), The Marks of the New Birth (Sermon 18), The Lord Our Righteousness (Sermon 20), Christian Perfection (Sermon 40), and On Working Out Our Own Salvation (Sermon 85). Lastly, this project provided an analysis of Adam Hamilton's preaching as a great model for contemporary Korean Methodist preachers.

This project was conducted at a seminar on August 28th, 2017 at God's Will Alliance Church in Ontario, California. Nine young Korean Methodist pastors attended the seminar. Overall feedback of the participants was positive. They enjoyed the lecture of John Wesley's practical theology and preaching. They confessed that they did not have an opportunity to study Wesley's preaching when they studied in Methodist seminaries in Korea. The seminar stirred their interest in learning more about Wesley's sermons. However, the focus in this project was to highlight the fundamental teachings of Wesley.

The participants were very interested in Adam Hamilton's preaching. Most of them did not know who he is. They agreed with why he is important in Methodist churches today and learned many things from his preaching. They decided to study more

about Wesley's practical theology and preaching, and Hamilton's preaching so that they could apply inspiration and insights to their sermons.

Conclusion

John Wesley, a great founder of Methodism, was a completely practical theologian. He wanted to know the way to heaven and teach people the scriptural way of salvation. He studied and preached only for the church and the Christian life. His life, theology, and preaching are all about salvation and the Christian life.

The brilliant heritage of Wesley can offer hope for the Korean Methodist church today. Korean Methodist churches today face a lot of crises and one of the most serious is the crisis of preaching. Current serious crises of the Korean Methodist Church essentially result from the crisis of the pulpit. Yet, there is still hope. Wesley has a way for the Korean Methodist church and preachers. Contemporary Korean Methodist Preachers have to restore Wesley's passion for the gospel. They have to completely study Wesley's practical theology and make his sermons their own. They should not forget that Wesley's all concerns were only for the church and the Christian life.

This project can be developed into a teaching series in order to help new pastors to quickly become informed and knowledgeable of Wesley's theology and preaching. The lecture presentations can be designed as video presentations to provide greater access to a broad range of preachers. In order to make the experience more interactive, a workbook would also be prepared so that preachers can engage Wesleyan theology and assess their own teaching and preaching.

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